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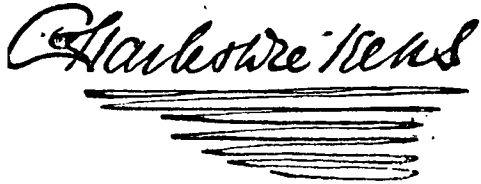
THE LIFE

OF



D. Maclise, R.A.

R. Graves A.R.A.

CHARLES DICKENS.

ÆT 27

Maclise R.A. C.H. Jeens

48

CHARLES DICKENS.

Outline of

THE PAINTING BY MACLISE (1839)

THE LIFE

OF

CHARLES DICKENS.

23146
a.

BY JOHN FORSTER.

48

VOLUME THE FIRST.

1812—1842.

XXJ31

LONDON:
CHAPMAN AND HALL, 193, PICCADILLY.
1872.

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TO THE DAUGHTERS OF CHARLES DICKENS,

MY GODDAUGHTER MARY

AND

HER SISTER KATE,

THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED BY THEIR FRIEND,

AND THEIR FATHER'S FRIEND AND EXECUTOR,

JOHN FORSTER.

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THE

LIFE OF CHARLES DICKENS.

CHAPTER I.

CHILDHOOD.

1812—1822.

CHARLES DICKENS, the most popular novelist of the century and one of the greatest humourists that England has produced, was born at Landport in Portsea on Friday the seventh of February, 1812. PORTSEA: 1812.

His father, John Dickens, a clerk in the Navy-pay office, was at this time stationed in the Portsmouth dockyard. He had made acquaintance with the lady, Elizabeth Barrow, who became afterwards his wife, through her elder brother, Thomas Barrow, also engaged on the establishment at Somerset-house; and she bore him in all a family of eight children, of whom two died in infancy. The eldest, Fanny (born 1810), was followed by Charles (entered in the baptismal register of Portsea as Charles John Huffham, though, on the very rare occasions when he subscribed that name he wrote Huffam); by another son, named Alfred, who died in childhood; by Letitia (born 1816); by another daughter, Family of John Dickens.

PORTSEA: 1812-14.

Harriet, who died also in childhood; by Frederick (born 1820); by Alfred Lamert (born 1822); and by Augustus (born 1827); of all of whom only the second daughter now survives.

Walter Scott tells us, in his fragment of autobiography, speaking of the strange remedies applied to his lameness, that he remembered lying on the floor in the parlour of his grandfather's farm-house, swathed up in a sheepskin warm from the body of the sheep, being then not three years old. David Copperfield's memory goes beyond this. He represents himself seeing so far back into the blank of his infancy, as to discern therein his mother and her servant, dwarfed to his sight by stooping down or kneeling on the floor, and himself going unsteadily from the one to the other. He admits this may be fancy, though he believes the power of observation in numbers of very young children to be quite wonderful for its closeness and accuracy, and thinks that the recollection of most of us can go farther back into such times than many of us suppose. But what he adds is certainly not fancy. 'If 'it should appear from anything I may set down in this 'narrative that I was a child of close observation, or that 'as a man I have a strong memory of my childhood, I un-'doubtedly lay claim to both of these characteristics.' Applicable as it might be to David Copperfield, this was simply and unaffectedly true of Charles Dickens.

David Copperfield *log.*

He has often told me that he remembered the small front garden to the house at Portsea, from which he was taken away when he was two years old, and where, watched by a nurse through a low kitchen-window almost

Ætat. 2.

level with the gravel-walk, he trotted about with something to eat, and his little elder sister with him. He was carried from the garden one day to see the soldiers exercise; and I perfectly recollect, that, on our being at Portsmouth together while he was writing *Nickleby*, he recognized the exact shape of the military parade seen by him as a very infant, on the same spot, a quarter of a century before. Portsea: 1814.

When his father was again brought up by his duties to London from Portsmouth, they went into lodgings in Norfolk-street, Middlesex-hospital; and it lived also in the child's memory that they had come away from Portsea in the snow. Their home, shortly after, was again changed, on the elder Dickens being placed upon duty in Chatham dockyard; and the house where he lived in Chatham, which had a plain-looking whitewashed plaster-front and a small garden before and behind, was in St. Mary's-place, otherwise called the Brook, and next door to a Baptist meeting-house called Providence-chapel, of which a Mr. Giles to be presently mentioned was minister. Charles at this time was between four and five years old;* and here he stayed till he was nine. Here the most durable of his early impressions were received; and the associations that were around him when he died, were those which at the outset of his life had affected him most strongly. London: 1814-16. Norfolk-street, Middlesex-hospital. Chatham: 1816-21.

* 'I shall cut this letter short, for they are playing Masaniello in the drawing-room, and I feel much as I used to do when I was a small child a few miles off, and Somebody (who I wonder, and which way did *She* go, when she died) hummed the evening hymn to me, and I cried on the pillow—either with the remorseful consciousness of having kicked Somebody else, or because still Somebody else had hurt my feelings in the course of the day.' From Gads- C. D. to J. F.

CHATHAM 1816-21.

The house called Gadshill-place stands on the strip of highest ground in the main road between Rochester and Gravesend. Often had we travelled past it together, years and years before it became his home; and never without some allusion to what he told me when first I saw it in his company, that amid the recollections connected with his childhood it held always a prominent place, for, upon first seeing it as he came from Chatham with his father, and looking up at it with much admiration, he had been promised that he might himself live in it, or in some such house, when he came to be a man, if he would only work hard enough. Which for a long time was his ambition. The story is a pleasant one, and receives authentic confirmation at the opening of one of his essays on travelling abroad, when as he passes along the road to Canterbury there crosses it a vision of his former self.

A vision of boyhood at Gadshill.

'So smooth was the old high road, and so fresh were 'the horses, and so fast went I, that it was midway 'between Gravesend and Rochester, and the widening 'river was bearing the ships, white sailed or black-smoked, 'out to sea, when I noticed by the wayside a very queer 'small boy.

'"Holloa!" said I, to the very queer small boy, "where '"do you live?"

'"At Chatham," says he.

'"What do you do there?" says I.

'"I go to school," says he.

'I took him up in a moment, and we went on. Pre-

hill, 24 Sep. 1857. 'Being here again, or as much here as anywhere in 'particular.'

sently, the very queer small boy says, "This is Gads-hill "we are coming to, where Falstaff went out to rob those "travellers, and ran away." Chatham: 1816-21.

'"You know something about Falstaff, eh?" said I.

'"All about him," said the very queer small boy. "I "am old (I am nine), and I read all sorts of books. But "*do* let us stop at the top of the hill, and look at the "house there, if you please!" C. D. *loq.*

'"You admire that house?" said I.

'"Bless you, sir," said the very queer small boy, "when "I was not more than half as old as nine, it used to be a "treat for me to be brought to look at it. And now I am "nine, I come by myself to look at it. And ever since I "can recollect, my father, seeing me so fond of it, has "often said to me, *If you were to be very persevering and "were to work hard, you might some day come to live in "it.* Though that's impossible!" said the very queer small boy, drawing a low breath, and now staring at the house out of window with all his might.

'I was rather amazed to be told this by the very queer small boy; for that house happens to be *my* house, and I have reason to believe that what he said was true.'

The queer small boy. The queer small boy was indeed his very self. He was a very little and a very sickly boy. He was subject to attacks of violent spasm which disabled him for any active exertion. He was never a good little cricket-player. He was never a first-rate hand at marbles, or peg-top, or prisoner's base. But he had great pleasure in watching the other boys, officers' sons for the most part, at these games, reading while they played; and he had

CHATHAM: 1816-21.

always the belief that this early sickness had brought to himself one inestimable advantage, in the circumstance of his weak health having strongly inclined him to reading. It will not appear, as my narrative moves on, that he owed much to his parents, or was other than in his first letter to Washington Irving he described himself to have been, a 'very small and not-over-particularly-taken-care-of boy;' but he has frequently been heard to say that his first desire for knowledge, and his earliest passion for reading, were awakened by his mother, who taught him the first rudiments not only of English, but also, a little later, of Latin. She taught him regularly every day for a long time, and taught him, he was convinced, thoroughly well. I once put to him a question in connection with this to which he replied in almost exactly the words he placed five years later in the mouth of David Copperfield. 'I faintly remember her teaching me the alphabet; and when I look upon the fat black letters in the primer, the puzzling novelty of their shapes, and the easy good nature of O and S, always seem to present themselves before me as they used to do.'

C. D. to J. F.

Preparatory day-school.

Then followed the preparatory day-school, a school for girls and boys to which he went with his sister Fanny, and which was in a place called Rome (pronounced Room) lane. Revisiting Chatham in his manhood, and looking for the place, he found it had been pulled down to make a new street, 'ages' before: but, out of the distance of the ages, arose nevertheless a not dim impression, that it had been over a dyer's shop; that he went up steps to it; that he had frequently grazed his knees

in doing so; and that in trying to scrape the mud off a very unsteady little shoe, he generally got his leg over the scraper.* Other similar memories of childhood have dropped from him occasionally in his lesser writings; whose readers may remember how vividly portions of his boyhood are reproduced in his fancy of the Christmas-tree, and will hardly have forgotten what he says, in his thoughtful little paper on Nurse's-stories, of the doubtful places and people to which children may be introduced before they are six years old, and forced, night after night, to go back to against their wills, by servants to whom they are entrusted. That childhood exaggerates what it sees, too, has he not tenderly told? How he thought the Rochester High-street must be at least as wide as Regent-street, which he afterwards discovered to be little better than a lane; how the public clock in it, supposed to be the finest clock in the world, turned out to be as moon-faced and weak a clock as a man's eyes ever saw; and how, in its town-hall, which had appeared to him once so glorious a structure that he had set it up in his mind as the model on which the genie of the lamp built the

CHATHAM: 1816-21.

Rochester revisited.

* 'The mistress of the establishment holds no place in our memory; but, rampant on one eternal door-mat, in an eternal entry long and narrow, is a puffy pug-dog, with a personal animosity towards us, who triumphs over Time. The bark of that baleful Pug, a certain radiating way he had of snapping at our undefended legs, the ghastly grinning of his moist black muzzle and white teeth, and the insolence of his crisp tail curled like a pastoral crook, all live and flourish. From an otherwise unaccountable association of him with a fiddle, we conclude that he was of French extraction, and his name *Fidèle*. He belonged to some female, chiefly inhabiting a back parlour, whose life appears to us to have been consumed in sniffing, and in wearing a brown beaver bonnet.'—*Reprinted Pieces*, 287. (In such quotations as are made from his writings, the *Charles Dickens Edition* will be used.).

School in Rome-lane.

CHATHAM: 1816-21.

palace for Aladdin, he had painfully to recognize a mere mean little heap of bricks, like a chapel gone demented. Yet not so painfully, either, when second thoughts wisely came. 'Ah! who was I that I should quarrel with the 'town for being changed to me, when I myself had come 'back, so changed, to it? All my early readings and 'early imaginations dated from this place, and I took 'them away so full of innocent construction and guileless 'belief, and I brought them back so worn and torn, so 'much the wiser and so much the worse!'

And here I may at once expressly mention, what already has been hinted, that even as Fielding described himself and his belongings in Captain Booth and Amelia, and protested always that he had writ in his books nothing more than he had seen in life, so it may be said of Dickens in more especial relation to David Copperfield. Many guesses have been made since his death, connecting David's autobiography with his own; accounting, by means of such actual experiences, for the so frequent recurrence in his writings of the prison-life, its humour and pathos, described in them with such wonderful reality; and discovering, in what David tells Steerforth at school of the stories he had read in his childhood, what it was that had given the bent to his own genius. There is not only truth in all this, but it will very shortly be seen that the identity went deeper than any had supposed, and covered experiences not less startling in the reality than they appear to be in the fiction.

Relation of David Copperfield to Charles Dickens.

Of the 'readings' and 'imaginations' which he describes

as brought away from Chatham, this authority can tell us. It is one of the many passages in *Copperfield* which are literally true, and its proper place is here. 'My 'father had left a small collection of books in a little 'room upstairs to which I had access (for it adjoined 'my own), and which nobody else in our house ever 'troubled. From that blessed little room, *Roderick* '*Random*, *Peregrine Pickle*, *Humphrey Clinker*, *Tom* '*Jones*, the *Vicar of Wakefield*, *Don Quixote*, *Gil Blas*, 'and *Robinson Crusoe* came out, a glorious host, to keep 'me company. They kept alive my fancy, and my hope 'of something beyond that place and time,—they, and 'the *Arabian Nights*, and the *Tales of the Genii*,—and 'did me no harm; for, whatever harm was in some of 'them, was not there for me; *I* knew nothing of it. It 'is astonishing to me now, how I found time, in the midst 'of my porings and blunderings over heavier themes, to 'read those books as I did. It is curious to me how I 'could ever have consoled myself under my small troubles '(which were great troubles to me), by impersonating my 'favorite characters in them. . . . I have been Tom Jones '(a child's Tom Jones, a harmless creature) for a week 'together. I have sustained my own idea of Roderick 'Random for a month at a stretch, I verily believe. I 'had a greedy relish for a few volumes of voyages and 'travels—I forget what, now—that were on those shelves; 'and for days and days I can remember to have gone 'about my region of our house, armed with the centre-'piece out of an old set of boot-trees: the perfect realisa-'tion of Captain Somebody, of the royal British navy,

Chatham: 1816-21.

A small but good library.

D. C. for C. D.

CHATHAM: 1816-21.

'in danger of being beset by savages, and resolved to sell 'his life at a great price. . . . When I think of it, the 'picture always rises in my mind, of a summer evening, 'the boys at play in the churchyard, and I sitting on my 'bed, reading as if for life. Every barn in the neighbour- 'hood, every stone in the church, and every foot of the 'churchyard, had some association of its own, in my mind, 'connected with these books, and stood for some locality 'made famous in them. I have seen Tom Pipes go 'climbing up the church-steeple; I have watched Strap, 'with the knapsack on his back, stopping to rest himself 'upon the wicket-gate; and I *know* that Commodore 'Trunnion held that club with Mr. Pickle, in the parlor 'of our little village alehouse.' Every word of this personal recollection had been written down as fact, some years before it found its way into *David Copperfield;* the only change in the fiction being his omission of the name of a cheap series of novelists then in course of publication, by which his father had become happily the owner of so large a lump of literary treasure in his small collection of books.

Summer evening picture.

Tragedy-writing.

The usual result followed. The child took to writing, himself; and became famous in his childish circle for having written a tragedy called *Misnar*, the Sultan of India, founded (and very literally founded, no doubt) on one of the *Tales of the Genii.* Nor was this his only distinction. He told a story offhand so well, and sang small comic songs so especially well, that he used to be elevated on chairs and tables, both at home and abroad, for more effective display of these talents; and when he

first told me of this, at one of the twelfth-night parties on his eldest son's birthday, he said he never recalled it that his own shrill little voice of childhood did not again tingle in his ears, and he blushed to think what a horrible little nuisance he must have been to many unoffending grown-up people who were called upon to admire him.

Chatham: 1816-21.

Comic-song singing.

His chief ally and encourager in these displays was a sort of cousin by marriage, named James Lamert, much older than himself, a youth of some ability, who with his widowed step-mother, sister to the navy-pay clerk's wife, had lived as part of the family in the earliest years of his childhood both at Portsea and Chatham; until, in the latter place, the lady formed a second marriage with a staff-doctor in the army. Her first husband, a commander in the navy, had been drowned long ago, at Rio Janeiro; and this youngest of her two step-sons, sent in due course to Sandhurst for his education, continued to visit Chatham from time to time. He had a turn for private theatricals; and as the quarters of his step-mother's second husband were in the ordnance-hospital at Chatham, a great rambling place otherwise at that time almost uninhabited, he had plenty of room in which to get up his entertainments. The staff-doctor himself played his part, and his portrait will be found in *Pickwick*.

Cousin Lamert.

By Lamert, I have often heard him say, he was first taken to the theatre at the very tenderest age. He could hardly, however, have been younger than Charles Lamb, whose first experience was of having seen *Artaxerxes* when six years old; and certainly not younger than Walter

First taken to theatre.

CHATHAM: 1816-21.

Scott, who was only four when he saw *As You Like It* on the Bath stage, and remembered having screamed out, *Ain't they brothers?* when scandalised by Orlando and Oliver beginning to fight.* But he was at any rate old enough to recollect how his young heart leapt with terror as the wicked king Richard, struggling for life against the virtuous Richmond, backed up and bumped against the box in which he was; and subsequent visits to the same sanctuary, as he tells us, revealed to him many wondrous secrets, 'of which not the least terrific were, that the 'witches in *Macbeth* bore an awful resemblance to the 'thanes and other proper inhabitants of Scotland; and 'that the good king Duncan couldn't rest in his grave, 'but was constantly coming out of it, and calling himself 'somebody else.'

At Mr. Giles's school.

During the last two years of Charles's residence at Chatham, he was sent to a school kept in Clover-lane by the young Baptist minister already named, Mr. William Giles. I have the picture of him here, very strongly in my mind, as a sensitive, thoughtful, feeble-bodied little boy, with an unusual sort of knowledge and fancy for such a child, and with a dangerous kind of wandering intelligence that a teacher might turn to good or evil, happiness or misery, as he directed it. Nor does the influence of Mr. Giles, such as it was, seem to have been other than favourable. Charles had himself a not ungrateful sense in after years that this first of his masters, in his little cared for child-

* 'A few weeks' residence at home convinced me, who had till then been an 'only child in the house of my grandfather, that a quarrel between brothers 'was a very natural event.'—Lockhart's *Life*, i. 30.

hood, had pronounced him to be a boy of capacity; and when, about half-way through the publication of *Pickwick*, his old teacher sent a silver snuff-box with admiring inscription to 'the inimitable Boz,' it reminded him of praise far more precious obtained by him at his first year's examination in the Clover-lane academy, when his recitation of a piece out of the *Humourist's Miscellany* about Doctor Bolus, had received, unless his youthful vanity bewildered him, a double encore. A habit, the only bad one taught him by Mr. Giles, of taking for a time, in very moderate quantities, the snuff called Irish blackguard, was the result of this gift from his old master; but he abandoned it after some few years, and it was never resumed.

Chatham: 1816-21.

Encored in Doctor Bolus.

It was in the boys' playing ground near Clover-lane in which the school stood, that, according to one of his youthful memories, he had been, in the hay-making time, delivered from the dungeons of Seringapatam, an immense pile '(of haycock),' by his countrymen the victorious British '(boy next door and his two cousins),' and had been recognized with ecstacy by his affianced one '(Miss 'Green),' who had come all the way from England '(second house in the terrace),' to ransom and marry him. It was in this playing-field, too, as he has himself recorded, he first heard in confidence from one whose father was greatly connected, 'being under government,' of the existence of a terrible banditti called *the radicals*, whose principles were that the prince-regent wore stays; that nobody had a right to any salary; and that the army and navy ought to be put down; horrors at which

Boyish recollections.

CHATHAM: 1816-21.

he trembled in his bed, after supplicating that the radicals might be speedily taken and hanged. Nor was it the least of the disappointments of his visit in after life to the scenes of his boyhood that he found this play-field had been swallowed up by a railway station. It was gone, with its two beautiful trees of hawthorn; and where the hedge, the turf, and all the buttercups and daisies had been, there was nothing but the stoniest of jolting roads.

Quitting Chatham: 1821.

He was not much over nine years old when his father was recalled from Chatham to Somerset-house, and he had to leave this good master, and the old place endeared to him by recollections that clung to him afterwards all his life long. It was here he had made the acquaintance not only of the famous books that David Copperfield specially names, of *Roderick Random*, *Peregrine Pickle*, *Humphrey Clinker*, *Tom Jones*, the *Vicar of Wakefield*, *Don Quixote*, *Gil Blas*, *Robinson Crusoe*, the *Arabian Nights*, and the *Tales of the Genii*, but also of the *Spectator*, the *Tatler*, the *Idler*, the *Citizen of the World*, and Mrs. Inchbald's *Collection of Farces*. These latter had been, as well, in the little library to which access was open to him; and of all of them his earliest remembrance was the having read them over and over at Chatham, not for the first, the second, or the third time. They were a host of friends when he had no single friend; and in leaving the place, I have often heard him say, he seemed to be leaving them too, and everything that had given his ailing little life its picturesqueness or sunshine. It was the birth-place of his fancy; and he hardly knew what

Birthplace of his fancy.

store he had set by its busy varieties of change and scene, until he saw the falling cloud that was to hide its pictures from him for ever. The gay bright regiments always going and coming, the continual paradings and firings, the successions of sham-sieges and sham-defences, the plays got up by his cousin in the hospital, the navy-pay yacht in which he had sailed to Sheerness with his father, and the ships floating out in the Medway with their far visions of sea—he was to lose them all. He was never to watch the boys at their games any more, or see them sham over again the sham-sieges and sham-defences. He was to be taken to London inside the stage-coach Commodore; and Kentish woods and fields, Cobham park and hall, Rochester cathedral and castle, and all the wonderful romance together, including the red-cheeked baby he had been wildly in love with, were to vanish like a dream. 'On the night before we came away,' he told me, 'my good master came flitting in among the 'packing-cases to give me Goldsmith's *Bee* as a keepsake. 'Which I kept for his sake, and its own, a long time 'afterwards.' A longer time afterwards he recollected the stage-coach journey, and said in one of his published papers that never had he forgotten, through all the intervening years, the smell of the damp straw in which he was packed and forwarded like game, carriage-paid. 'There was no other inside passenger, and I consumed 'my sandwiches in solitude and dreariness, and it rained 'hard all the way, and I thought life sloppier than I 'expected to find it.'

CHATHAM: 1821.

Last night there: C. D. to J. F.

C. D. *loq.*

The earliest impressions received and retained by him

LONDON: 1821-2.

in London, were of his father's money involvements; and now first he heard mentioned 'the deed,' representing that crisis of his father's affairs in fact which is ascribed in fiction to Mr. Micawber's. He knew it in later days to have been 'a composition with creditors; though at this earlier date he was conscious of having confounded it with parchments of a much more demoniacal description. One result from the awful document soon showed itself in enforced retrenchment. The family had to take up its abode in a house in Bayham-street, Camden-town.

Bayham-street, Camden-town.

Bayham-street was about the poorest part of the London suburbs then, and the house was a mean small tenement, with a wretched little back-garden abutting on a squalid court. Here was no place for new acquaintances to him: no boys were near with whom he might hope to become in any way familiar. A washerwoman lived next door, and a Bow-street officer lived over the way. Many many times has he spoken to me of this, and how he seemed at once to fall into a solitary condition apart from all other boys of his own age, and to sink into a neglected state at home which had been always quite unaccountable to him. 'As I thought,' he said on one occasion very bitterly, 'in the little back-garret in Bayham-street, of 'all I had lost in losing Chatham, what would I have given, 'if I had had anything to give, to have been sent back to 'any other school, to have been taught something any-'where!' He was at another school already, not knowing it. The self-education forced upon him was teaching him, all unconsciously as yet, what, for the future that awaited him, it most behoved him to know.

C. D. to J. F.

That he took, from the very beginning of this Bayham-street life, his first impression of that struggling poverty which is nowhere more vividly shown than in the commoner streets of the ordinary London suburb, and which enriched his earliest writings with a freshness of original humour and quite unstudied pathos that gave them much of their sudden popularity, there cannot be a doubt. 'I certainly understood it,' he has often said to me, 'quite as well then as I do now.' But he was not conscious yet that he did so understand it, or of the influence it was exerting on his life even then. It seems almost too much to assert of a child, say at nine or ten years old, that his observation of everything was as close and good, or that he had as much intuitive understanding of the character and weaknesses of the grown-up people around him, as when the same keen and wonderful faculty had made him famous among men. But my experience of him led me to put implicit faith in the assertion he unvaryingly himself made, that he had never seen any cause to correct or change what in his boyhood was his own secret impression of anybody, whom he had had, as a grown man, the opportunity of testing in later years.

LONDON: 1821-2.

First impressions from Bayham-street.

Faculty of early observation.

How it came, that, being what he was, he should now have fallen into the misery and neglect of the time about to be described, was a subject on which thoughts were frequently interchanged between us; and on one occasion he gave me a sketch of the character of his father which, as I can here repeat it in the exact words employed by him, will be the best preface I can make to what I feel that I have no alternative but to tell. 'I know my father

LONDON: 1821-2.

Bayham-street.

'to be as kindhearted and generous a man as ever lived 'in the world. Everything that I can remember of his 'conduct to his wife, or children, or friends, in sickness 'or affliction, is beyond all praise. By me, as a sick child, 'he has watched night and day, unweariedly and patiently, 'many nights and days. He never undertook any business, 'charge or trust, that he did not zealously, conscientiously, 'punctually, honourably discharge. His industry has 'always been untiring. He was proud of me, in his way, 'and had a great admiration of the comic singing. But, 'in the ease of his temper, and the straitness of his 'means, he appeared to have utterly lost at this time 'the idea of educating me at all, and to have utterly put 'from him the notion that I had any claim upon him, in 'that regard, whatever. So I degenerated into cleaning 'his boots of a morning, and my own; and making myself 'useful in the work of the little house; and looking after 'my younger brothers and sisters (we were now six in all); 'and going on such poor errands as arose out of our poor 'way of living.'

His own description of his father.

The elder cousin of whom I have spoken, James Lamert, who had lately completed his education at Sandhurst and was waiting in hopes of a commission, lived now with the family in Bayham-street, and had not lost his taste for the stage, or his ingenuities in connection with it. Taking pity on the solitary lad, he made and painted a little theatre for him. It was the only fanciful reality of his present life; but it could not supply what he missed most sorely, the companionship of boys of his own age, with whom he might share in the advantages of school,

A small theatre made for him.

and contend for its prizes. His sister Fanny was at about this time elected as a pupil to the royal academy of music; and he has told me what a stab to his heart it was, thinking of his own disregarded condition, to see her go away to begin her education, amid the tearful good wishes of everybody in the house. London: 1821-2. Bayham-street.

Nevertheless, as time went on, his own education still unconsciously went on as well, under the sternest and most potent of teachers; and, neglected and miserable as he was, he managed gradually to transfer to London all the dreaminess and all the romance with which he had invested Chatham. There were then at the top of Bayham-street some almshouses, and were still when he re-visited it with me nearly twenty-seven years ago; and to go to this spot, he told me, and look from it over the dust-heaps and dock-leaves and fields (no longer there when we saw it together) at the cupola of St. Paul's looming through the smoke, was a treat that served him for hours of vague reflection afterwards. To be taken out for a walk into the real town, especially if it were anywhere about Covent-garden or the Strand, perfectly entranced him with pleasure. But, most of all, he had a profound attraction of repulsion to St. Giles's. If he could only induce whomsoever took him out to take him through Seven-dials, he was supremely happy. 'Good Heaven!' he would exclaim, 'what wild visions of prodigies of wickedness, want, and 'beggary, arose in my mind out of that place!' He was all this time, the reader will remember, still subject to continual attacks of illness, and, by reason of them, a very small boy even for his age. St. Paul's. St. Giles's.

LONDON: 1821-2.

Bayham-street.

That part of his boyhood is now very near of which, when the days of fame and prosperity came to him, he felt the weight upon his memory as a painful burthen until he could lighten it by sharing it with a friend; and an accident I will presently mention led him first to reveal it. There is, however, an interval of some months still to be described, of which, from conversations or letters that passed between us, after or because of this confidence, and that already have yielded fruit to these pages, I can supply some vague and desultory notices. The use thus made of them, it is due to myself to remark, was contemplated then; for though, long before his death, I had ceased to believe it likely that I should survive to write about him, he had never withdrawn the wish at this early time strongly expressed, or the confidences, not only then but to the very eve of his death reposed in me, that were to enable me to fulfil it.* The fulfilment indeed he had

Desire that I should write of him.

C. D. to J. F.

* The reader will forgive my quoting from a letter of the date of the 22nd April, 1848. 'I desire no better for my fame, when my personal dustiness 'shall be past the control of my love of order, than such a biographer and such 'a critic.' 'You know me better,' he wrote, resuming the same subject on the 6th of July, 1862, 'than any other man does, or ever will.' In an entry of my diary during the interval between these years, I find a few words that not only mark the time when I first saw in its connected shape the autobiographical fragment which will form the substance of the second chapter of this biography, but also express his own feeling respecting it when written. '20 January, 1849. The description may make none of the impression on 'others that the reality made on him. . . . Highly probable that it may never 'see the light. No wish. Left to J. F. or others.' The first number of *David Copperfield* appeared five months after this date; but though I knew, even before he adapted his fragment of autobiography to the eleventh number, that he had now abandoned the notion of completing it under his own name, the '*no wish*,' or the discretion left me, was never in any way subsequently modified. What follows, from the same entry, refers to the manuscript of the fragment. 'No blotting, as when writing fiction; but straight on, as when 'writing ordinary letter.'

himself rendered more easy by partially uplifting the veil in *David Copperfield.* LONDON: 1821-2.

The visits made from Bayham-street were chiefly to two connections of the family, his mother's elder brother and his godfather. The latter, who was what is called a rigger, and mast, oar, and block-maker, lived at Limehouse in a substantial handsome sort of way, and was kind to his godchild. It was always a great treat to him to go; and the London night-sights as he returned were a perpetual joy and marvel. Here, too, the comic-singing accomplishment was brought into play so greatly to the admiration of one of the godfather's guests, an honest boat-builder, that he pronounced the little lad to be a 'progidy.' The visits to his bachelor-uncle, the fellow-clerk with his father in Somerset-house, were nearer home. Mr. Thomas Barrow, the eldest of his mother's family, had broken his leg in a fall; and, while laid up with this illness, his lodging was in Gerrard-street, Soho, in the upper part of the house of a worthy gentleman then recently deceased, a bookseller named Manson, father to the partner in the celebrated firm of Christie and Manson, whose widow at this time carried on the business. Attracted by the look of the lad as he went upstairs, these good people lent him books to amuse him; among them Miss Porter's *Scottish Chiefs,* Holbein's *Dance of Death,* and George Colman's *Broad Grins.* The latter seized his fancy very much; and he was so impressed by its description of Covent-garden, in the piece called the Elder-brother, that he stole down to the market by himself to compare it with the book. He

Bayham-street.

At his godfather's.

Stolen visit to Covent-garden.

LONDON: 1822.

Bayham-street.

remembered, as he said in telling me this, snuffing up the flavour of the faded cabbage-leaves as if it were the very breath of comic fiction. Nor was he far wrong, as comic fiction then and for some time after was. It was reserved for himself to give sweeter and fresher breath to it. Many years were to pass first, but he was beginning already to make the trial.

His uncle was shaved by a very odd old barber out of Dean-street, Soho, who was never tired of reviewing the events of the last war, and especially of detecting Napoleon's mistakes, and re-arranging his whole life for him on a plan of his own. The boy wrote a description of this old barber, but never had courage to show it. At about the same time, taking for his model the description of the canon's housekeeper in *Gil. Blas*, he sketched a deaf old woman who waited on them in Bayham-street, and who made delicate hashes with walnut-ketchup. As little did he dare to show this, either; though he thought it, himself, extremely clever.

First efforts at description.

In Bayham-street, meanwhile, affairs were going on badly; the poor boy's visits to his uncle, while the latter was still kept a prisoner by his accident, were interrupted by another attack of fever; and on his recovery the mysterious 'deed' had again come uppermost. His father's resources were so low, and all his expedients so thoroughly exhausted, that trial was to be made whether his mother might not come to the rescue. The time was arrived for her to exert herself, she said; and she 'must do some-'thing.' The godfather down at Limehouse was reported to have an Indian connexion. People in the East Indies

His mother exerting herself.

always sent their children home to be educated. She would set up a school. They would all grow rich by it. And then, thought the sick boy, 'perhaps even I might 'go to school myself.' London: 1822.

A house was soon found at number four, Gower-street north; a large brass plate on the door announced Mrs. Dickens's Establishment; and the result I can give in the exact words of the then small actor in the comedy, whose hopes it had raised so high. 'I left, at a great 'many other doors, a great many circulars calling attention 'to the merits of the establishment. Yet nobody ever 'came to school, nor do I recollect that anybody ever 'proposed to come, or that the least preparation was 'made to receive anybody. But I know that we got on 'very badly with the butcher and baker; that very often 'we had not too much for dinner; and that at last my 'father was arrested.' The interval between the sponging-house and the prison was passed by the sorrowful lad in running errands and carrying messages for the prisoner, delivered with swollen eyes and through shining tears; and the last words said to him by his father before he was finally carried to the Marshalsea, were to the effect that the sun was set upon him for ever. 'I really believed at 'the time,' said Dickens to me, 'that they had broken my 'heart.' He took afterwards ample revenge for this false alarm by making all the world laugh at them in *David Copperfield*.

Gower-street north.

C. D. to J. F.

His father arrested.

The readers of Mr. Micawber's history who remember David's first visit to the Marshalsea prison, and how upon seeing the turnkey he recalled the turnkey in the blanket

LONDON: 1822.

Gower-street north.

in *Roderick Random*, will read with curious interest what follows, written as a personal experience of fact two or three years before the fiction had even entered into his thoughts.

Visit to his father in prison.

'My father was waiting for me in the lodge, and we 'went up to his room (on the top story but one), and 'cried very much. And he told me, I remember, to take 'warning by the Marshalsea, and to observe that if a man 'had twenty pounds a-year, and spent nineteen pounds 'nineteen shillings and sixpence, he would be happy; 'but that a shilling spent the other way would make him 'wretched. I see the fire we sat before, now; with two 'bricks inside the rusted grate, one on each side, to pre- 'vent its burning too many coals. Some other debtor 'shared the room with him, who came in by-and-by; and 'as the dinner was a joint-stock repast, I was sent up to '"Captain Porter," in the room overhead, with Mr. 'Dickens's compliments, and I was his son, and could he, 'Captain P, lend me a knife and fork?

C. D. *loq.*

Prison inmates.

'Captain Porter lent the knife and fork, with his com- 'pliments in return. There was a very dirty lady in his 'little room; and two wan girls, his daughters, with shock 'heads of hair. I thought I should not have liked to 'borrow Captain Porter's comb. The Captain himself was 'in the last extremity of shabbiness; and if I could draw 'at all, I would draw an accurate portrait of the old, old, 'brown great-coat he wore, with no other coat below it. 'His whiskers were large. I saw his bed rolled up in a 'corner; and what plates, and dishes, and pots he had, on 'a shelf; and I knew (God knows how) that the two girls

'with the shock heads were Captain Porter's natural 'children, and that the dirty lady was not married to 'Captain P. My timid, wondering station on his threshold, 'was not occupied more than a couple of minutes, I dare 'say; but I came down again to the room below with all 'this as surely in my knowledge, as the knife and fork 'were in my hand.'

LONDON: 1822.

Gower-street north.

A child-observer.

How there was something agreeable and gipsy-like in the dinner after all, and how he took back the Captain's knife and fork early in the afternoon, and how he went home to comfort his mother with an account of his visit, David Copperfield has also accurately told. Then, at home, came many miserable daily struggles that seemed to last an immense time, yet did not perhaps cover many weeks. Almost everything by degrees was sold or pawned, little Charles being the principal agent in those sorrowful transactions. Such of the books as had been brought from Chatham, *Peregrine Pickle*, *Roderick Random*, *Tom Jones*, *Humphrey Clinker*, and all the rest, went first. They were carried off from the little chiffonier, which his father called the library, to a bookseller in the Hampstead-road, the same that David Copperfield describes as in the City-road; and the account of the sales, as they actually occurred and were told to me long before David was born, was reproduced word for word in his imaginary narrative. 'The keeper of this bookstall, who lived in a little house 'behind it, used to get tipsy every night, and to be 'violently scolded by his wife every morning. More than 'once, when I went there early, I had audience of him in 'a turn-up bedstead, with a cut in his forehead or a black

Disposes of old friends.

LONDON: 1822. Gower-street north.

'eye, bearing witness to his excesses over night (I am 'afraid he was quarrelsome in his drink); and he, with a 'shaking hand, endeavouring to find the needful shillings 'in one or other of the pockets of his clothes, which lay 'upon the floor, while his wife, with a baby in her arms 'and her shoes down at heel, never left off rating him. 'Sometimes he had lost his money, and then he would 'ask me to call again; but his wife had always got some '(had taken his, I dare say, while he was drunk), and 'secretly completed the bargain on the stairs, as we went 'down together.'

D. C. (for C. D.) *loq.*

The same pawnbroker's shop, too, which was so well known to David, became not less familiar to Charles; and a good deal of notice was here taken of him by the pawnbroker, or by his principal clerk who officiated behind the counter, and who, while making out the duplicate, liked of all things to hear the lad conjugate a Latin verb, and translate or decline his musa and dominus. Every thing to this accompaniment went gradually; until at last, even of the furniture of Gower-street number four, there was nothing left except a few chairs, a kitchen table, and some beds. Then they encamped, as it were, in the two parlours of the emptied house, and lived there night and day.

At the pawnbroker's.

All which is but the prelude to what remains to be described.

CHAPTER II.

HARD EXPERIENCES IN BOYHOOD.

1822—1824.

LONDON: 1822.

THE incidents to be told now would probably never have been known to me, or indeed any of the occurrences of his childhood and youth, but for the accident of a question which I put to him one day in the March or April of 1847.

Gower-street north.

I asked if he remembered ever having seen in his boyhood our friend the elder Mr. Dilke, his father's acquaintance and contemporary, who had been a clerk in the same office in Somerset-house to which Mr. John Dickens belonged. Yes, he said, he recollected seeing him at a house in Gerrard-street, where his uncle Barrow lodged during an illness, and Mr. Dilke had visited him. Never at any other time. Upon which I told him that some one else had been intended in the mention made to me, for that the reference implied not merely his being met accidentally, but his having had some juvenile employment in a warehouse near the Strand; at which place Mr. Dilke, being with the elder Dickens one day, had noticed him, and received, in return for the gift of a half-crown, a very low bow. He was silent for several minutes; I felt

Mr. Dilke's half-crown.

LONDON: 1822. Gower-street north.

that I had unintentionally touched a painful place in his memory; and to Mr. Dilke I never spoke of the subject again. It was not however then, but some weeks later, that Dickens made further allusion to my thus having struck unconsciously upon a time of which he never could lose the remembrance while he remembered anything, and the recollection of which, at intervals, haunted him and made him miserable, even to that hour.

Tells the story of his boyhood.

Very shortly afterwards, I learnt in all their detail the incidents that had been so painful to him, and what then was said to me or written respecting them revealed the story of his boyhood. The idea of *David Copperfield*, which was to take all the world into his confidence, had not at this time occurred to him; but what it had so startled me to know, his readers were afterwards told with only such change or addition as for the time might sufficiently disguise himself under cover of his hero. For, the poor little lad, with good ability and a most sensitive nature, turned at the age of ten into a 'labouring hind' in the service of 'Murdstone and Grinby,' and conscious already of what made it seem very strange to him that he could so easily have been thrown away at such an age, was indeed himself. His was the secret agony of soul at finding himself 'companion to Mick Walker and Mealy 'Potatoes,' and his the tears that mingled with the water in which he and they rinsed and washed out bottles. It had all been written, as fact, before he thought of any other use for it; and it was not until several months later, when the fancy of *David Copperfield*, itself suggested by what he had so written of his early troubles,

D. C. and C. D.

began to take shape in his mind, that he abandoned his first intention of writing his own life. Those warehouse experiences fell then so aptly into the subject he had chosen, that he could not resist the temptation of immediately using them; and the manuscript recording them, which was but the first portion of what he had designed to write, was embodied in the substance of the eleventh and earlier chapters of his novel. What already had been sent to me, however, and proof-sheets of the novel interlined at the time, enable me now to separate the fact from the fiction; and to supply to the story of the author's childhood those passages, omitted from the book, which, apart from their illustration of the growth of his character, present to us a picture of tragical suffering, and of tender as well as humorous fancy, unsurpassed in even the wonders of his published writings.

LONDON: 1822. Gower-street north.

The person indirectly responsible for the scenes to be described was the young relative James Lamert, the cousin by his mother's side of whom I have made frequent mention, who got up the plays at Chatham, and after passing at Sandhurst had been living with the family in Bayham-street in the hope of obtaining a commission in the army. This did not come until long afterwards, when, in consideration of his father's services, he received it, and relinquished it then in favour of a younger brother; but he had meanwhile, before the family removed from Camden-town, ceased to live with them. The husband of a sister of his (of the same name as himself, being indeed his cousin, George Lamert), a man of some property, had recently embarked in an odd sort of com-

James and George Lamert.

LONDON: 1822-4.

mercial speculation; and had taken him into his office, and his house, to assist in it. I give now the fragment of the autobiography of Dickens.

At Hungerford-stairs.

C. D. *loq.*

'This speculation was a rivalry of "Warren's Blacking, '"30, Strand,"—at that time very famous. One Jona-'than Warren (the famous one was Robert), living at 30, 'Hungerford-stairs, or market, Strand (for I forget which 'it was called then), claimed to have been the original 'inventor or proprietor of the blacking recipe, and to 'have been deposed and ill-used by his renowned relation. 'At last he put himself in the way of selling his recipe, 'and his name, and his 30, Hungerford-stairs, Strand '(30, Strand, very large, and the intermediate direction 'very small), for an annuity; and he set forth by his agents 'that a little capital would make a great business of it. 'The man of some property was found in George Lamert, 'the cousin and brother-in-law of James. He bought this 'right and title, and went into the blacking business and 'the blacking premises.

'—In an evil hour for me, as I often bitterly thought. 'Its chief manager, James Lamert, the relative who had 'lived with us in Bayham-street, seeing how I was em-'ployed from day to day, and knowing what our domestic 'circumstances then were, proposed that I should go into 'the blacking warehouse, to be as useful as I could, at a 'salary, I think, of six shillings a week. I am not clear 'whether it was six or seven. I am inclined to believe, 'from my uncertainty on this head, that it was six at 'first, and seven afterwards. At any rate the offer was 'accepted very willingly by my father and mother, and

First employment in life.

'on a Monday morning I went down to the blacking 'warehouse to begin my business life. LONDON: 1822-4.

'It is wonderful to me how I could have been so easily 'cast away at such an age. It is wonderful to me, that, 'even after my descent into the poor little drudge I had 'been since we came to London, no one had compassion 'enough on me—a child of singular abilities, quick, eager, 'delicate, and soon hurt, bodily or mentally—to suggest 'that something might have been spared, as certainly it 'might have been, to place me at any common school. 'Our friends, I take it, were tired out. No one made any 'sign. My father and mother were quite satisfied. They 'could hardly have been more so, if I had been twenty 'years of age, distinguished at a grammar-school, and 'going to Cambridge. At Hungerford-stairs. C. D. *loq.*

'The blacking warehouse was the last house on the 'left-hand side of the way, at old Hungerford-stairs. It 'was a crazy, tumble-down old house, abutting of course 'on the river, and literally overrun with rats. Its wainscotted rooms, and its rotten floors and staircase, and the 'old grey rats swarming down in the cellars, and the 'sound of their squeaking and scuffling coming up the 'stairs at all times, and the dirt and decay of the place, 'rise up visibly before me, as if I were there again. The 'counting-house was on the first floor, looking over the 'coal-barges and the river. There was a recess in it, in 'which I was to sit and work. My work was to cover the 'pots of paste-blacking; first with a piece of oil-paper, 'and then with a piece of blue paper; to tie them round 'with a string; and then to clip the paper close and neat, The blacking warehouse. A poor little drudge.

LONDON: 1822-4.

At Hungerford-stairs.

C. D. *loq.*

'all round, until it looked as smart as a pot of ointment 'from an apothecary's shop. When a certain number of 'grosses of pots had attained this pitch of perfection, I was 'to paste on each a printed label; and then go on again 'with more pots. Two or three other boys were kept at 'similar duty down stairs on similar wages. One of them 'came up, in a ragged apron and a paper cap, on the first 'Monday morning, to show me the trick of using the

Bob Fagin.

'string and tying the knot. His name was Bob Fagin; 'and I took the liberty of using his name, long after-'wards, in *Oliver Twist.*

'Our relative had kindly arranged to teach me some-'thing in the dinner-hour; from twelve to one, I think it 'was; every day. But an arrangement so incompatible 'with counting-house business soon died away, from no

'Facilis Descensus.'

'fault of his or mine; and for the same reason, my small 'work-table, and my grosses of pots, my papers, string, 'scizzors, paste-pot, and labels, by little and little, 'vanished out of the recess in the counting-house, and 'kept company with the other small work-tables, grosses 'of pots, papers, string, scizzors, and paste-pots, downstairs. 'It was not long, before Bob Fagin and I, and another boy

'Poll' Green.

'whose name was Paul Green, but who was currently 'believed to have been christened Poll (a belief which I 'transferred, long afterwards again, to Mr. Sweedlepipe, 'in *Martin Chuzzlewit*), worked generally, side by side. 'Bob Fagin was an orphan, and lived with his brother-'in-law, a waterman. Poll Green's father had the addi-'tional distinction of being a fireman, and was em-'ployed at Drury-lane theatre; where another relation

'of Poll's, I think his little sister, did imps in the panto- 'mimes.' LONDON: 1822-4.

'No words can express the secret agony of my soul as I 'sunk into this companionship; compared these every day 'associates with those of my happier childhood; and felt 'my early hopes of growing up to be a learned and distin- 'guished man, crushed in my breast. The deep remem- 'brance of the sense I had of being utterly neglected and 'hopeless; of the shame I felt in my position; of the 'misery it was to my young heart to believe that, day 'by day, what I had learned, and thought, and delighted 'in, and raised my fancy and my emulation up by, was 'passing away from me, never to be brought back any 'more; cannot be written. My whole nature was so 'penetrated with the grief and humiliation of such con- 'siderations, that even now, famous and caressed and 'happy, I often forget in my dreams that I have a dear 'wife and children; even that I am a man; and wander 'desolately back to that time of my life.

At Hungerford-stairs. C. D. *loq.*

Crushed hopes and recollections.

'My mother and my brothers and sisters (excepting 'Fanny in the royal academy of music) were still encamped, 'with a young servant-girl from Chatham-workhouse, in 'the two parlours in the emptied house in Gower-street 'north. It was a long way to go and return within the 'dinner-hour, and, usually, I either carried my dinner 'with me, or went and bought it at some neighbouring 'shop. In the latter case, it was commonly a saveloy 'and a penny loaf; sometimes a fourpenny plate of beef 'from a cook's shop; sometimes, a plate of bread and 'cheese, and a glass of beer, from a miserable old public-

The family in Gower-street.

LONDON: 1822-4.

At Hungerford-stairs. C. D. *Æt.*

'house over the way: the Swan, if I remember right, or 'the Swan and something else that I have forgotten. 'Once, I remember tucking my own bread (which I had 'brought from home in the morning) under my arm, 'wrapped up in a piece of paper like a book, and going 'into the best dining-room in Johnson's alamode beef-'house in Charles-court, Drury-lane, and magnificently 'ordering a small plate of alamode beef to eat with it. 'What the waiter thought of such a strange little 'apparition, coming in all alone, I don't know; but I 'can see him now, staring at me as I ate my dinner, and 'bringing up the other waiter to look. I gave him a 'halfpenny, and I wish, now, that he hadn't taken it.'

Regaling alamode.

Saturday night's journey home.

I lose here for a little while the fragment of direct narrative, but I perfectly recollect that he used to describe Saturday night as his great treat. It was a grand thing to walk home with six shillings in his pocket, and to look in at the shop windows, and think what it would buy. Hunt's roasted corn, as a British and patriotic substitute for coffee, was in great vogue just then; and the little fellow used to buy it, and roast it on the Sunday. There was a cheap periodical of selected pieces called the *Portfolio*, which he had also a great fancy for taking home with him. The new proposed 'deed,' meanwhile, had failed to propitiate his father's creditors; all hope of arrangement passed away; and the end was that his mother and her encampment in Gower-street north broke up and went to live in the Marshalsea. I am able at this point to resume his own account.

Home broken up.

'The key of the house was sent back to the landlord,

'who was very glad to get it; and I (small Cain that I 'was, except that I had never done harm to any one) was 'handed over as a lodger to a reduced old lady, long 'known to our family, in Little-college-street, Camden-'town, who took children in to board, and had once done 'so at Brighton; and who, with a few alterations and 'embellishments, unconsciously began to sit for Mrs. 'Pipchin in *Dombey* when she took in me.

LONDON: 1822-4.

At Hungerford-stairs.

C. D. *loq.*

'She had a little brother and sister under her care then; 'somebody's natural children, who were very irregularly 'paid for; and a widow's little son. The two boys and I 'slept in the same room. My own exclusive breakfast, of 'a penny cottage loaf and a pennyworth of milk, I pro-'vided for myself. I kept another small loaf, and a quarter 'of a pound of cheese, on a particular shelf of a particular 'cupboard; to make my supper on when I came back at 'night. They made a hole in the six or seven shillings, I 'know well; and I was out at the blacking-warehouse 'all day, and had to support myself upon that money all 'the week. I suppose my lodging was paid for, by my 'father. I certainly did not pay it myself; and I certainly 'had no other assistance whatever (the making of my 'clothes, I think, excepted), from Monday morning until 'Saturday night. No advice, no counsel, no encourage-'ment, no consolation, no support, from any one that I can 'call to mind, so help me God.

At Mrs. Roylance's in Camden-town.

A cast-away.

'Sundays, Fanny and I passed in the prison. I was at 'the academy in Tenterden-street, Hanover-square, at 'nine o'clock in the morning, to fetch her; and we walked 'back there together, at night.

Sundays in prison.

LONDON: 1822-4.

At Hungerford-stairs.

C. D. *log*

'I was so young and childish, and so little qualified—'how could I be otherwise?—to undertake the whole 'charge of my own existence, that, in going to Hungerford-'stairs of a morning, I could not resist the stale pastry 'put out at half-price on trays at the confectioners' doors 'in Tottenham-court-road; and I often spent in that, the 'money I should have kept for my dinner. Then I went 'without my dinner, or bought a roll, or a slice of pudding. 'There were two pudding shops between which I was 'divided, according to my finances. One was in a court 'close to St. Martin's-church (at the back of the church)

A choice of puddings.

'which is now removed altogether. The pudding at 'that shop was made with currants, and was rather a 'special pudding, but was dear: two penn'orth not being 'larger than a penn'orth of more ordinary pudding. A 'good shop for the latter was in the Strand, somewhere 'near where the Lowther-arcade is now. It was a stout, 'hale pudding, heavy and flabby; with great raisins in it, 'stuck in whole, at great distances apart. It came up hot, 'at about noon every day; and many and many a day did 'I dine off it.

'We had half-an-hour, I think, for tea. When I had 'money enough, I used to go to a coffee-shop, and have 'half-a-pint of coffee, and a slice of bread and butter. 'When I had no money, I took a turn in Covent-garden

Places of resort.

'market, and stared at the pine-apples. The coffee-shops 'to which I most resorted were, one in Maiden-lane; one 'in a court (non-existent now) close to Hungerford-'market; and one in St. Martin's-lane, of which I only 'recollect that it stood near the church, and that in the

'door there was an oval glass-plate, with COFFEE-ROOM 'painted on it, addressed towards the street. If I ever 'find myself in a very different kind of coffee-room now, 'but where there is such an inscription on glass, and read 'it backward on the wrong side MOOR-EEFFOC (as I often 'used to do then, in a dismal reverie), a shock goes 'through my blood.

LONDON: 1822-4.

At Hungerford-stairs.

C. D. *loq.*

'I know I do not exaggerate, unconsciously and unintentionally, the scantiness of my resources and the difficulties of my life. I know that if a shilling or so were given me by any one, I spent it in a dinner or a tea. I know that I worked, from morning to night, with common men and boys, a shabby child. I know that I tried, but ineffectually, not to anticipate my money, and to make it last the week through; by putting it away in a drawer I had in the counting-house, wrapped into six little parcels, each parcel containing the same amount, and labelled with a different day. I know that I have lounged about the streets, insufficiently and unsatisfactorily fed. I know that, but for the mercy of God, I might easily have been, for any care that was taken of me, a little robber or a little vagabond.

What really was:

what easily might have been.

'But I held some station at the blacking warehouse too. Besides that my relative at the counting-house did what a man so occupied, and dealing with a thing so anomalous, could, to treat me as one upon a different footing from the rest, I never said, to man or boy, how it was that I came to be there, or gave the least indication of being sorry that I was there. That I suffered in secret, and that I suffered exquisitely, no one ever knew

LONDON: 1822-4.

At Hungerford-stairs.

C. D. *loq.*

'but I. How much I suffered, it is, as I have said already, 'utterly beyond my power to tell. No man's imagination 'can overstep the reality. But I kept my own counsel, 'and I did my work. I knew from the first, that if I 'could not do my work as well as any of the rest, I could 'not hold myself above slight and contempt. I soon 'became at least as expeditious and as skilful with my 'hands, as either of the other boys. Though perfectly 'familiar with them, my conduct and manners were 'different enough from theirs to place a space between us. 'They, and the men, always spoke of me as "the young 'gentleman." A certain man (a soldier once) named 'Thomas, who was the foreman, and another named 'Harry, who was the carman and wore a red jacket, used 'to call me "Charles" sometimes, in speaking to me; but 'I think it was mostly when we were very confidential, 'and when I had made some efforts to entertain them 'over our work with the results of some of the old 'readings, which were fast perishing out of my mind. 'Poll Green uprose once, and rebelled against the "young 'gentleman" usage; but Bob Fagin settled him speedily.

The foreman and the carman.

'My rescue from this kind of existence I considered 'quite hopeless, and abandoned as such, altogether; 'though I am solemnly convinced that I never, for one 'hour, was reconciled to it, or was otherwise than 'miserably unhappy. I felt keenly, however, the being 'so cut off from my parents, my brothers, and sisters; 'and, when my day's work was done, going home to such 'a miserable blank; and *that*, I thought, might be cor-'rected. One Sunday night I remonstrated with my father

Remonstrance with his father.

'on this head, so pathetically and with so many tears, that 'his kind nature gave way. He began to think that 'it was not quite right. I do believe he had never 'thought so before, or thought about it. It was the first 'remonstrance I had ever made about my lot, and perhaps 'it opened up a little more than I intended. A back-'attic was found for me at the house of an insolvent-court 'agent, who lived in Lant-street in the borough, where 'Bob Sawyer lodged many years afterwards. A bed and 'bedding were sent over for me, and made up on the floor. 'The little window had a pleasant prospect of a timber-'yard; and when I took possession of my new abode, I 'thought it was a Paradise.'

LONDON: 1822-4. At Hungerford-stairs. C. D. *loq.* A lodging in Lant-street.

There is here another blank, which it is however not difficult to supply from letters and recollections of my own. What was to him of course the great pleasure of his paradise of a lodging, was its bringing him again, though after a fashion sorry enough, within the circle of home. From this time he used to breakfast 'at home,' in other words in the Marshalsea; going to it as early as the gates were open, and for the most part much earlier. They had no want of bodily comforts there. His father's income, still going on, was amply sufficient for that; and in every respect indeed but elbow-room, I have heard him say, the family lived more comfortably in prison than they had done for a long time out of it. They were waited on still by the maid-of-all-work from Bayham-street, the orphan girl of the Chatham workhouse, from whose sharp little worldly and also kindly ways he took his first impression of the Marchioness in the *Old Curiosity Shop*. She also

Breakfast and supper in Marshalsea.

LONDON: 1822-4. — At Hungerford-stairs.

had a lodging in the neighbourhood that she might be early on the scene of her duties; and when Charles met her, as he would do occasionally, in his lounging-place by London-bridge, he would occupy the time before the gates opened by telling her quite astonishing fictions about the wharves and the tower. 'But I hope I believed them 'myself,' he would say. Besides breakfast, he had supper also in the prison; and got to his lodging generally at nine o'clock. The gates closed always at ten.

C. D. and the Marchioness.

I must not omit what he told me of the landlord of this little lodging. He was a fat, good-natured, kind old gentleman. He was lame, and had a quiet old wife; and he had a very innocent grown-up son, who was lame too. They were all very kind to the boy. He was taken with one of his old attacks of spasm one night, and the whole three of them were about his bed until morning. They were all dead when he told me this, but in another form they live still very pleasantly as the Garland family in the *Old Curiosity Shop*.

Landlord's family in Lant-street.

He had a similar illness one day in the warehouse, which I can describe in his own words. 'Bob Fagin was 'very good to me on the occasion of a bad attack of my 'old disorder. I suffered such excruciating pain that 'time, that they made a temporary bed of straw in my 'old recess in the counting-house, and I rolled about on 'the floor, and Bob filled empty blacking-bottles with hot 'water, and applied relays of them to my side, half the 'day. I got better, and quite easy towards evening; but 'Bob (who was much bigger and older than I) did not 'like the idea of my going home alone, and took me

C. D. *loq.*

'under his protection. I was too proud to let him know 'about the prison; and after making several efforts to 'get rid of him, to all of which Bob Fagin in his good- 'ness was deaf, shook hands with him on the steps of a 'house near Southwark-bridge on the Surrey side, making 'believe that I lived there. As a finishing piece of reality 'in case of his looking back, I knocked at the door, I 'recollect, and asked, when the woman opened it, if 'that was Mr. Robert Fagin's house.'

LONDON: 1822-4. At Hungerford-stairs. C. D. *loq.* Adventure with Bob Fagin.

The Saturday nights continued, as before, to be precious to him. 'My usual way home was over Blackfriars-bridge, 'and down that turning in the Blackfriars-road which 'has Rowland Hill's chapel on one side, and the likeness 'of a golden dog licking a golden pot over a shop door on 'the other. There are a good many little low-browed old 'shops in that street, of a wretched kind; and some are 'unchanged now. I looked into one a few weeks ago, 'where I used to buy boot-laces on Saturday nights, and 'saw the corner where I once sat down on a stool to have 'a pair of ready-made half-boots fitted on. I have been 'seduced more than once, in that street on a Saturday 'night, by a show-van at a corner; and have gone in, 'with a very motley assemblage, to see the Fat-pig, the 'Wild-indian, and the Little-lady. There were two or 'three hat-manufactories there, then (I think they are 'there still); and among the things which, encountered 'anywhere, or under any circumstances, will instantly 'recall that time, is the smell of hat-making.'

C. D. *loq.* Home to Lant-street. Saturday-night shows.

His father's attempts to avoid going through the court having failed, all needful ceremonies had to be

LONDON: 1822-4.

undertaken to obtain the benefit of the insolvent debtors' act; and in one of these little Charles had his part to play. One condition of the statute was that the wearing apparel and personal matters retained were not to exceed twenty pounds sterling in value. 'It was necessary, as a 'matter of form, that the clothes I wore should be seen 'by the official appraiser. I had a half-holiday to enable 'me to call upon him, at his own time, at a house some-'where beyond the Obelisk. I recollect his coming out to 'look at me with his mouth full, and a strong smell of 'beer upon him, and saying good-naturedly that "that '"would do," and "it was all right." Certainly the hardest 'creditor would not have been disposed (even if he had 'been legally entitled) to avail himself of my poor white 'hat, little jacket, or corduroy trowsers. But I had a fat 'old silver watch in my pocket, which had been given me 'by my grandmother before the blacking days, and I had 'entertained my doubts as I went along whether that 'valuable possession might not bring me over the twenty 'pounds. So I was greatly relieved, and made him a bow 'of acknowledgment as I went out.'

At Hungerford-stairs.

C. D. *loq.*

Appraised officially.

Still the want felt most by him was the companionship of boys of his own age. He had no such acquaintance. Sometimes, he remembered to have played on the coal-barges at dinner time, with Poll Green and Bob Fagin; but those were rare occasions. He generally strolled alone, about the back streets of the Adelphi; or explored the Adelphi arches. One of his favourite localities was a little public-house by the water side, approached by an underground passage called the fox-under-the-hill, which

Playing on the coal-barges.

we once vainly looked for together; and he had a vision which he has mentioned in *Copperfield* of sitting eating something on a bench outside, one fine evening, and looking at some coal-heavers dancing before the house. 'I wonder 'what they thought of me,' says David. He had himself already said the same in his fragment of autobiography.

LONDON: 1822-4. At Hungerford-stairs.

D. C. for C. D.

Another characteristic little incident he made afterwards one of David's experiences, but I am able to give it here without the disguises that adapt it to the fiction. 'I was such a little fellow, with my poor white hat, little 'jacket, and corduroy trowsers, that frequently, when I 'went into the bar of a strange public-house for a glass of 'ale or porter to wash down the saveloy and the loaf I 'had eaten in the street, they didn't like to give it me. 'I remember, one evening (I had been somewhere for my 'father, and was going back to the borough over West-'minster-bridge), that I went into a public-house in 'Parliament-street, which is still there though altered, at 'the corner of the short street leading into Cannon-row, 'and said to the landlord behind the bar, "What is your '"very best—the VERY *best*—ale, a glass?" For, the occasion 'was a festive one, for some reason: I forget why. It 'may have been my birthday, or somebody else's. "Two-'"pence," says he. "Then," says I, "just draw me a glass '"of that, if you please, with a good head to it." The 'landlord looked at me, in return, over the bar, from head 'to foot, with a strange smile on his face; and instead of 'drawing the beer, looked round the screen and said 'something to his wife, who came out from behind it, with 'her work in her hand, and joined him in surveying me.

Publican and wife at Cannon-row.

LONDON: 1822-4.

At Hungerford-stairs. C. D. *loq.*

'Here we stand, all three, before me now, in my study in 'Devonshire-terrace. The landlord, in his shirt sleeves, 'leaning against the bar window-frame; his wife, looking 'over the little half-door; and I, in some confusion, looking 'up at them from outside the partition. They asked me 'a good many questions, as what my name was, how old I 'was, where I lived, how I was employed, &c. &c. To all 'of which, that I might commit nobody, I invented appro-'priate answers. They served me with the ale, though I 'suspect it was not the strongest on the premises; and 'the landlord's wife, opening the little half-door and 'bending down, gave me a kiss that was half-admiring 'and half-compassionate, but all womanly and good, I am 'sure.'

A Marshalsea incident in *Copperfield.*

A later, and not less characteristic, incident of the true story of this time found also a place, three or four years after it was written, in his now famous fiction. It preceded but by a short time the discharge, from the Marshalsea, of the elder Dickens; to whom a rather considerable legacy from a relative had accrued not long before ('some 'hundreds' I understood), and had been paid into court during his imprisonment. The scene to be described arose on the occasion of a petition drawn up by him before he left, praying, not for the abolition of imprisonment for debt as David Copperfield relates, but for the less dignified but more accessible boon of a bounty to the prisoners to drink his majesty's health on his majesty's forthcoming birthday.

The incident as it occurred.

'I mention the circumstance because it illustrates, to 'me, my early interest in observing people. When I went

'to the Marshalsea of a night, I was always delighted to 'hear from my mother what she knew about the histories 'of the different debtors in the prison; and when I heard 'of this approaching ceremony, I was so anxious to see 'them all come in, one after another (though I knew the 'greater part of them already, to speak to, and they me), 'that I got leave of absence on purpose, and established 'myself in a corner, near the petition. It was stretched 'out, I recollect, on a great ironing-board, under the 'window, which in another part of the room made a 'bedstead at night. The internal regulations of the place, 'for cleanliness and order, and for the government of a 'common room in the ale-house; where hot water and 'some means of cooking, and a good fire, were provided 'for all who paid a very small subscription; were ex- 'cellently administered by a governing committee of 'debtors, of which my father was chairman for the time 'being. As many of the principal officers of this body as 'could be got into the small room without filling it up, 'supported him, in front of the petition; and my old 'friend Captain Porter (who had washed himself, to do 'honour to so solemn an occasion) stationed himself close 'to it, to read it to all who were unacquainted with its 'contents. The door was then thrown open, and they 'began to come in, in a long file; several waiting on the 'landing outside, while one entered, affixed his signature, 'and went out. To everybody in succession, Captain 'Porter said, "Would you like to hear it read?" If he 'weakly showed the least disposition to hear it, Captain 'Porter, in a loud sonorous voice, gave him every word of

LONDON: 1822-4. At Hungerford-stairs. C. D. *loq.*

Last experience in Marshalsea.

LONDON: 1822-4.

At Hungerford-stairs.

C. D. *loq.*

'it. I remember a certain luscious roll he gave to such 'words as "Majesty—gracious Majesty—your gracious '"Majesty's unfortunate subjects—your Majesty's well-'"known munificence,"—as if the words were something 'real in his mouth, and delicious to taste: my poor father 'meanwhile listening with a little of an author's vanity, 'and contemplating (not severely) the spikes on the 'opposite wall. Whatever was comical in this scene, and 'whatever was pathetic, I sincerely believe I perceived 'in my corner, whether I demonstrated or not, quite as 'well as I should perceive it now. I made out my own 'little character and story for every man who put his 'name to the sheet of paper. I might be able to do that 'now, more truly: not more earnestly, or with a closer 'interest. Their different peculiarities of dress, of face, of 'gait, of manner, were written indelibly upon my memory. 'I would rather have seen it than the best play ever 'played; and I thought about it afterwards, over the pots 'of paste-blacking, often and often. When I looked, with 'my mind's eye, into the Fleet-prison during Mr. Pick-'wick's incarceration, I wonder whether half-a-dozen men 'were wanting from the Marshalsea crowd that came filing 'in again, to the sound of Captain Porter's voice!'

Early interest in observing people.

Materials for *Pickwick.*

When the family left the Marshalsea they all went to lodge with the lady in Little-college-street, a Mrs. Roylance, who has obtained unexpected immortality as Mrs. Pipchin; and they afterwards occupied a small house in Somers-town. But, before this time, Charles was present with some of them in Tenterden-street to see his sister Fanny receive one of the prizes given to the pupils of the

royal academy of music. 'I could not bear to think of 'myself—beyond the reach of all such honourable emula- 'tion and success. The tears ran down my face. I felt 'as if my heart were rent. I prayed, when I went to bed 'that night, to be lifted out of the humiliation and neglect 'in which I was. I never had suffered so much before. 'There was no envy in this.' There was little need that he should say so. Extreme enjoyment in witnessing the exercise of her talents, the utmost pride in every success obtained by them, he manifested always to a degree otherwise quite unusual with him; and on the day of her funeral, which we passed together, I had most affecting proof of his tender and grateful memory of her in these childish days. A few more sentences, certainly not less touching than any that have gone before, will bring the story of them to its close. They stand here exactly as written by him.

LONDON: 1822-4.

At Hungerford-stairs. C. D. *loq.*

His sister Fanny.

'I am not sure that it was before this time, or after it, 'that the blacking warehouse was removed to Chandos- 'street, Covent-garden. It is no matter. Next to the 'shop at the corner of Bedford-street in Chandos-street, 'are two rather old-fashioned houses and shops adjoining 'one another. They were one then, or thrown into one, 'for the blacking business; and had been a butter shop. 'Opposite to them was, and is, a public-house, where I 'got my ale, under these new circumstances. The stones 'in the street may be smoothed by my small feet going 'across to it at dinner-time, and back again. The esta- 'blishment was larger now, and we had one or two new 'boys. Bob Fagin and I had attained to great dexterity

The blacking house removed. C. D. *loq.*

LONDON: 1822-4.

At Chandos-street, Covent-garden.

C. D. *loq.*

'in tying up the pots. I forget how many we could do, in 'five minutes. We worked, for the light's sake, near the 'second window as you come from Bedford-street; and we 'were so brisk at it, that the people used to stop and look 'in. Sometimes there would be quite a little crowd there. 'I saw my father coming in at the door one day when we 'were very busy, and I wondered how he could bear it.

'Now, I generally had my dinner in the warehouse. 'Sometimes I brought it from home, so I was better off. 'I see myself coming across Russell-square from Somers-'town, one morning, with some cold hotch-potch in a 'small basin tied up in a handkerchief. I had the same

Solitary street wanderings.

'wanderings about the streets as I used to have, and 'was just as solitary and self-dependent as before; but I 'had not the same difficulty in merely living. I never 'however heard a word of being taken away, or of being 'otherwise than quite provided for.

'At last, one day, my father, and the relative so often 'mentioned, quarrelled; quarrelled by letter, for I took 'the letter from my father to him which caused the 'explosion, but quarrelled very fiercely. It was about me.

Father's quarrel with James Lamert.

'It may have had some backward reference, in part, for 'anything I know, to my employment at the window. 'All I am certain of is, that, soon after I had given him 'the letter, my cousin (he was a sort of cousin, by 'marriage) told me he was very much insulted about me; 'and that it was impossible to keep me, after that. I 'cried very much, partly because it was so sudden, and 'partly because in his anger he was violent about my father, 'though gentle to me. Thomas, the old soldier, comforted

'me, and said he was sure it was for the best. With a 'relief so strange that it was like oppression, I went home. LONDON: 1822-4.

'My mother set herself to accommodate the quarrel, 'and did so next day. She brought home a request for 'me to return next morning, and a high character of me, 'which I am very sure I deserved. My father said, I 'should go back no more, and should go to school. I do 'not write resentfully or angrily: for I know how all these 'things have worked together to make me what I am: but 'I never afterwards forgot, I never shall forget, I never can 'forget, that my mother was warm for my being sent back. At Chandos-street, Covent-garden. C. D. *loq.* Quits the warehouse.

'From that hour until this at which I write, no word 'of that part of my childhood which I have now gladly 'brought to a close, has passed my lips to any human being. 'I have no idea how long it lasted; whether for a year, 'or much more, or less. From that hour, until this, my 'father and my mother have been stricken dumb upon it. 'I have never heard the least allusion to it, however far 'off and remote, from either of them. I have never, until 'I now impart it to this paper, in any burst of confidence 'with any one, my own wife not excepted, raised the 'curtain I then dropped, thank God. A silence of a quarter of a century: broken by no one.

'Until old Hungerford-market was pulled down, until 'old Hungerford-stairs were destroyed, and the very 'nature of the ground changed, I never had the courage 'to go back to the place where my servitude began. I 'never saw it. I could not endure to go near it. For 'many years, when I came near to Robert Warren's in 'the Strand, I crossed over to the opposite side of the 'way, to avoid a certain smell of the cement they put Associations of servitude.

London: 1824.

'upon the blacking-corks, which reminded me of what I 'was once. It was a very long time before I liked to go 'up Chandos-street. My old way home by the borough 'made me cry, after my eldest child could speak.

End of autobiographical fragment.

'In my walks at night I have walked there often, since 'then, and by degrees I have come to write this. It does 'not seem a tithe of what I might have written, or of what 'I meant to write.'

The substance of some after-talk explanatory of points in the narrative, of which a note was made at the time, may be briefly added. He could hardly have been more than twelve years old when he left the place, and was still unusually small for his age; much smaller, though two years older, than his own eldest son was at the time of these confidences. His mother had been in the blacking warehouse many times; his father not more than once or twice. The rivalry of Robert Warren by Jonathan's representatives, the cousins George and James, was carried to wonderful extremes in the way of advertisement; and they were all very proud, he told me, of the cat scratching the boot, which was *their* house's device. The poets in the house's regular employ he remembered, too, and made his first study from one of them for the poet of Mrs. Jarley's wax-work. The whole enterprise, however, had the usual end of such things. The younger cousin tired of the concern; and a Mr. Wood, the proprietor who took James's share and became George's partner, sold it ultimately to Robert Warren. It continued to be his at the time Dickens and myself last spoke of it together, and he had made an excellent bargain of it.

What became of the business.

CHAPTER III.

SCHOOL-DAYS AND START IN LIFE.

1824—1830.

In what way these strange experiences of his boyhood affected him afterwards, this narrative of his life must show: but there were influences that made themselves felt even on his way to manhood. London: 1824.

What at once he brought out of the humiliation that had impressed him so deeply, though scarcely as yet quite consciously, was a natural dread of the hardships that might still be in store for him, sharpened by what he had gone through; and this, though in its effect for the present imperfectly understood, became by degrees a passionate resolve, even while he was yielding to circumstances, *not to be* what circumstances were conspiring to make him. All that was involved in what he had suffered and sunk into, could not have been known to him at the time; but it was plain enough later, as we see; and in conversation with me after the revelation was made, he used to find, at extreme points in his life, the explanation of himself in those early trials. He had derived great good from them, but not without alloy. The fixed and eager determination, the restless and resistless energy, Outcome of boyish trials. Effect in later years.

LONDON: 1824.

which opened to him opportunities of escape from many mean environments, not by turning off from any path of duty, but by resolutely rising to such excellence or distinction as might be attainable in it, brought with it some disadvantage among many noble advantages. Of this he was himself aware, but not to the full extent. What it was that in society made him often uneasy, shrinking, and over-sensitive, he knew; but all the danger he ran in bearing down and over-mastering the feeling, he did not know. A too great confidence in himself, a sense that everything was possible to the will that would make it so, laid occasionally upon him self-imposed burdens greater than might be borne by any one with safety. In that direction there was in him, at such times, something even hard and aggressive; in his determinations a something that had almost the tone of fierceness; something in his nature that made his resolves insuperable, however hasty the opinions on which they had been formed. So rare were these manifestations, however, and so little did they prejudice a character as entirely open and generous as it was at all times ardent and impetuous, that only very infrequently, towards the close of the middle term of a friendship which lasted without the interruption of a day for more than three and thirty years, were they ever unfavourably presented to me. But there they were; and when I have seen strangely present, at such chance intervals, a stern and even cold isolation of self-reliance side by side with a susceptivity almost feminine and the most eager craving for sympathy, it has seemed to me as though his habitual impulses for everything kind and

Disadvantage.

gentle had sunk, for the time, under a sudden hard and inexorable sense of what fate had dealt to him in those early years. On more than one occasion indeed I had confirmation of this. 'I must entreat you,' he wrote to me in June 1862, 'to pause for an instant, and 'go back to what you know of my childish days, and to 'ask yourself whether it is natural that something of the 'character formed in me then, and lost under happier 'circumstances, should have reappeared in the last five 'years. The never to be forgotten misery of that 'old time, bred a certain shrinking sensitiveness in a 'certain ill-clad ill-fed child, that I have found come 'back in the never to be forgotten misery of this later 'time.'

LONDON: 1824-6.

C. D. to J. F. (1862.)

One good there was, however, altogether without drawback, and which claims simply to be mentioned before my narrative is resumed. The story of his childish misery has itself sufficiently shown that he never throughout it lost his precious gift of animal spirits, or his native capacity for humorous enjoyment; and there were positive gains to him from what he underwent, which were also rich and lasting. To what in the outset of his difficulties and trials gave the decisive bent to his genius, I have already made special reference; and we are to observe, of what followed, that with the very poor and unprosperous, out of whose sufferings and strugglings, and the virtues as well as vices born of them, his not least splendid successes were wrought, his childish experiences had made him actually one. They were not his clients whose cause he pleaded with such pathos and

Advantages.

LONDON: 1824-6.

humour, and on whose side he got the laughter and tears of all the world, but in some sort his very self. Nor was it a small part of this manifest advantage that he should have obtained his experience as a child and not as a man; that only the good part, the flower and fruit of it, was plucked by him; and that nothing of the evil part, none of the earth in which the seed was planted, remained to soil him.

Next move in life.

His next move in life can also be given in his own language. 'There was a school in the Hampstead-road 'kept by Mr. Jones, a Welshman, to which my father dis- 'patched me to ask for a card of terms. The boys were C. D. *loq.* 'at dinner, and Mr. Jones was carving for them with a 'pair of holland sleeves on, when I acquitted myself of 'this commission. He came out, and gave me what I 'wanted; and hoped I should become a pupil. I did. At 'seven o'clock one morning, very soon afterwards, I went 'as day scholar to Mr. Jones's establishment, which was in 'Mornington-place, and had its school-room sliced away by 'the Birmingham-railway, when that change came about. 'The school-room however was not threatened by directors 'or civil engineers then, and there was a board over the 'door graced with the words WELLINGTON HOUSE 'ACADEMY.'

Wellington-house academy.

At Wellington-house academy he remained nearly two years, being a little over fourteen years of age when he quitted it. In his minor writings as well as in *Copperfield* will be found general allusions to it, and there is a paper among his pieces reprinted from *Household Words* which purports specifically to describe it. To the account

thercin given of himself when he went to the school, as advanced enough, so safely had his memory retained its poor fragments of early schooling, to be put into *Virgil*, as getting sundry prizes, and as attaining to the eminent position of its first boy, one of his two schoolfellows with whom I have had communication, makes objection; but both admit that the general features of the place are reproduced with wonderful accuracy, and more especially in those points for which the school appears to have been much more notable than for anything connected with the scholarship of its pupils.

LONDON: 1824-6.

Wellington-house academy.

In the reprinted piece Dickens describes it as remarkable for white mice. He says that red-polls, linnets, and even canaries, were kept by the boys in desks, drawers, hat-boxes, and other strange refuges for birds; but that white mice were the favourite stock, and that the boys trained the mice much better than the master trained the boys. He recalled in particular one white mouse who lived in the cover of a Latin dictionary, ran up ladders, drew Roman chariots, shouldered muskets, turned wheels, and even made a very creditable appearance on the stage as the Dog of Montargis, who might have achieved greater things but for having had the misfortune to mistake his way in a triumphal procession to the Capitol, when he fell into a deep inkstand, and was dyed black and drowned.

Described by C. D.

Nevertheless he mentions the school as one also of some celebrity in its neighbourhood, though nobody could have said why; and adds that among the boys the master was supposed to know nothing, and one of the ushers was

LONDON: 1824-6.

supposed to know everything. 'We are still inclined to 'think the first named supposition perfectly correct. We 'went to look at the place only this last midsummer, and 'found that the railway had cut it up, root and branch. A 'great trunk line had swallowed the playground, sliced 'away the school-room, and pared off the corner of the 'house. Which, thus curtailed of its proportions, pre- 'sented itself in a green stage of stucco, profile-wise 'towards the road, like a forlorn flat-iron without a handle, 'standing on end.'

Wellington-house academy.

Revisited after five and twenty years.

Letter from a schoolfellow.

One who knew him in those early days, Mr. Owen P. Thomas, thus writes to me (February 1871). 'I had the 'honour of being Mr. Dickens's schoolfellow for about two 'years (1824—1826), both being day-scholars, at Mr. 'Jones's "Classical and Commercial Academy," as then 'inscribed in front of the house, and which was situated 'at the corner of Granby-street and the Hampstead-road. 'The house stands now in its original state, but the school 'and large playground behind disappeared on the forma- 'tion of the London and North-western railway, which at 'this point runs in a slanting direction from Euston-square 'underneath the Hampstead-road. We were all com- 'panions and playmates when out of school as well as 'fellow students therein.' (Mr. Thomas includes in this remark the names of Henry Danson, now a physician in practice in London; of Daniel Tobin, whom I remember to have been frequently assisted by his old schoolfellow in later years; and of Richard Bray.) 'You will find a graphic 'sketch of the school by Mr. Dickens himself in *Household* '*Words* of 11th October, 1851. The article is entitled Our

Sketch by C. D

'School. The names of course are feigned; but, allowing for slight colouring, the persons and incidents described are all true to life, and easily recognizable by any one who attended the school at the time. The Latin master was Mr. Manville, or Mandeville, who for many years was well known at the library of the British-museum. The academy, after the railroad overthrew it, was removed to another house in the neighbourhood, but Mr. Jones and two at least of his assistant masters have long ago departed this life.'

LONDON: 1824-6. Wellington-house academy.

One of the latter was the usher believed to know everything, who was writing master, mathematical master, English master, divided the little boys with the Latin master, made out the bills, mended the pens, and always called at parents' houses to enquire after sick boys, because he had gentlemanly manners. This picture, my correspondent recognized; as well as those of the fat little dancing master who taught them hornpipes, of the Latin master who stuffed his ears with onions for his deafness, of the gruff serving-man who nursed the boys in scarlet fever, and of the principal himself who was always ruling ciphering books with a bloated mahogany ruler, smiting the palms of offenders with the same diabolical instrument, or viciously drawing a pair of pantaloons tight with one of his large hands and caning the wearer with the other.

C. D.'s recollections of school.

'My recollection of Dickens whilst at school,' Mr. Thomas continues, 'is that of a healthy looking boy, small but well-built, with a more than usual flow of spirits, inducing to harmless fun, seldom or ever I think to mischief, to which

Schoolfellow's recollections of C. D.

London: 1824-6. Wellington-house academy.

'so many lads at that age are prone.* I cannot recall 'anything that then indicated he would hereafter become 'a literary celebrity; but perhaps he was too young then. 'He usually held his head more erect than lads ordinarily 'do, and there was a general smartness about him. His 'week-day dress of jacket and trousers, I can clearly 'remember, was what is called pepper-and-salt; and instead 'of the frill that most boys of his age wore then, he had a 'turn-down collar, so that he looked less youthful in con-'sequence. He invented what we termed a "lingo," pro-'duced by the addition of a few letters of the same sound 'to every word; and it was our ambition, walking and 'talking thus along the street, to be considered foreigners. 'As an alternate amusement the present writer well 'remembers extemporising tales of some sort, and reciting 'them offhand, with Dickens and Danson or Tobin 'walking on either side of him. I enclose you a copy 'of a note I received from him when he was between 'thirteen and fourteen years of age, perhaps one of the 'earliest productions of his pen. The Leg referred to 'was the Legend of something, a pamphlet romance I 'had lent him; the Clavis was of course the Latin school 'book so named.'

Schoolboy's letter.

There is some underlying whim or fun in the 'Leg' allusions which Mr. Thomas appears to have overlooked, and certainly fails to explain: but the note, which is here given in fac-simile, may be left to speak for itself; and in the signature the reader will be amused to see the first faint beginning of a flourish afterwards famous.

LONDON: 1824-6.

Wellington-house academy.

(No date, but was written in latter part of 1825.)

Tom!

I am quite ashamed I have not returned your letter but I have lost it by Harry to whom I wanted you to have lent it.

My Mama has promised to take me to the play on Saturday next & I dare say she will take you also if you like to come.

Yours &c

C. Dickens.

P.S. I suppose you have all had a holiday at this time

a wooden leg. I have weighed yours every saturday night

at a very reduced price

cheaper in comparison than a leg.

Yours &c

C. Dickens.

C. D.'s autograph in boyhood.

LONDON: 1824-6.

A meeting after thirty years.

'After a lapse of years,' Mr. Thomas continues, 'I recog-
'nized the celebrated writer as the individual I had known
'so well as a boy, from having preserved this note; and
'upon Mr. Dickens visiting Reading in December 1854
'to give one of his earliest readings for the benefit of the
'literary institute, of which he had become president on
'Mr. Justice Talfourd's death, I took the opportunity of
'showing it to him, when he was much diverted therewith.
'On the same occasion we conversed about mutual school-
'fellows, and among others Daniel Tobin was referred to,
'whom I remembered to have been Dickens's *most* intimate
'companion in the school days (1824 to 1826). His reply
'was that Tobin either was then, or had previously been,
'assisting him in the capacity of amanuensis; but there is
Daniel Tobin.
'a subsequent mystery about Tobin, in connection with
'his friend and patron, which I have never been able to
'comprehend; for I understood shortly afterwards that there
'was entire separation between them, and it must have
'been an offence of some gravity to have sundered an
'acquaintance formed in early youth, and which had
'endured, greatly to Tobin's advantage, so long. He
'resided in our schooldays in one of the now old and
'grimy-looking stone-fronted houses in George-street,
'Euston-road, a few doors from the Orange-tree tavern.
'It is the opinion of the other schoolfellow with whom we
'were intimate, Doctor Danson, that upon leaving school
'Mr. Dickens and Tobin entered the same solicitor's office,
'and this he thinks was either in or near Lincoln's-inn-
'fields.'

The offence of Tobin went no deeper than the having at

last worn out even Dickens's patience and kindness. His applications for relief were so incessantly repeated, that to cut him and them adrift altogether was the only way of escape from what had become an intolerable nuisance. To Mr. Thomas's letter the reader will thank me for adding one not less interesting with which Dr. Henry Danson has favoured me. We have here, with the same fun and animal spirits, a little of the proneness to mischief which his other school-fellow says he was free from; but the mischief is all of the harmless kind, and might perhaps have been better described as but part of an irrepressible vivacity.

LONDON: 1824-6.

What I remember of Tobin.

'My impression is that I was a schoolfellow of Dickens 'for nearly two years: he left before me, I think at 'about 15 years of age. Mr. Jones's school, called the 'Wellington-academy, was in the Hampstead-road, at 'the north-east corner of Granby-street. The school-'house was afterwards removed for the London and North-'western railway. It was considered at the time a very 'superior sort of school, one of the best indeed in that 'part of London; but it was most shamefully mis-'managed, and the boys made but very little progress. 'The proprietor, Mr. Jones, was a Welshman; a most 'ignorant fellow, and a mere tyrant; whose chief employ-'ment was to scourge the boys. Dickens has given a 'very lively account of this place in his paper entitled 'Our School, but it is very mythical in many respects, 'and more especially in the compliment he pays in it to 'himself. I do not remember that Dickens distinguished 'himself in any way, or carried off any prizes. My belief 'is that he did not learn Greek or Latin there, and you

Letter from another school-fellow.

Chief employment of chief master.

LONDON: 1824-6.

'will remember there is no allusion to the classics in any 'of his writings. He was a handsome, curly-headed lad, 'full of animation and animal spirits, and probably was 'connected with every mischievous prank in the school. 'I do not think he came in for any of Mr. Jones's scourg- 'ing propensity: in fact, together with myself, he was 'only a day-pupil, and with these there was a wholesome 'fear of tales being carried home to the parents. His 'personal appearance at that time is vividly brought home 'to me in the portrait of him taken a few years later by Mr. 'Lawrence.' He resided with his friends, in a very small 'house in a street leading out of Seymour-street, north of 'Mr. Judkin's chapel.

Wellington-house academy.

C. D. in the school.

'Depend on it he was quite a self-made man, and his 'wonderful knowledge and command of the English 'language must have been acquired by long and patient 'study after leaving his last school.

'I have no recollection of the boy you name. His 'chief associates were, I think, Tobin, Mr. Thomas, Bray, 'and myself. The first-named was his chief ally, and his 'acquaintance with him appears to have continued many 'years afterwards. About that time the Penny and 'Saturday Magazines were published weekly, and were 'greedily read by us. We kept bees, white mice, and 'other living things, clandestinely in our desks; and the 'mechanical arts were a good deal cultivated, in the shape 'of coach-building, and making pumps and boats, the 'motive power of which was the white mice.

C. D.'s associates and pursuits.

'I think at that time Dickens took to writing small 'tales, and we had a sort of club for lending and circu-

Writing tales and getting up plays.

'lating them. Dickens was also very strong in using 'a sort of lingo, which made us quite unintelligible to 'bystanders. We were very strong, too, in theatricals. 'We mounted small theatres, and got up very gorgeous 'scenery to illustrate the *Miller and his Men* and *Cherry* '*and Fair Star.* I remember the present Mr. Beverley, 'the scene painter, assisted us in this. Dickens was 'always a leader at these plays, which were occasionally 'presented with much solemnity before an audience of 'boys, and in the presence of the ushers. My brother, 'assisted by Dickens, got up the *Miller and his Men,* in 'a very gorgeous form. Master Beverley constructed the 'mill for us in such a way that it could tumble to pieces 'with the assistance of crackers. At one representation 'the fireworks in the last scene, ending with the destruc- 'tion of the mill, were so very real that the police 'interfered, and knocked violently at the doors. Dickens's 'after taste for theatricals might have had its origin in 'these small affairs.

LONDON: 1824-6.

Wellington-house academy.

Master Beverley paints scenes.

'I quite remember Dickens on one occasion heading 'us in Drummond-street in pretending to be poor boys, 'and asking the passers-by for charity—especially old 'ladies; one of whom told us she "had no money for '"beggar boys." On these adventures, when the old ladies 'were quite staggered by the impudence of the demand, 'Dickens would explode with laughter and take to his 'heels.

Street-acting.

'I met him one Sunday morning shortly after he left 'the school, and we very piously attended the morning 'service at Seymour-street chapel. I am sorry to say

At church.

LONDON : 1824-6.

Close of Dr. Danson's letter.

'Master Dickens did not attend in the slightest degree to 'the service, but incited me to laughter by declaring his 'dinner was ready and the potatoes would be spoiled, and 'in fact behaved in such a manner that it was lucky for 'us we were not ejected from the chapel.

'I heard of him some time after from Tobin, whom I 'met carrying a foaming pot of London particular in 'Lincoln's-inn-fields, and I then understood that Dickens 'was in the same or some neighbouring office.

Schoolfellows after 40 years.

'Many years elapsed after this before I became aware, 'from accidentally reading Our School, that the brilliant 'and now famous Dickens was my old schoolfellow. I 'didn't like to intrude myself upon him; and it was not 'until three or four years ago, when he presided at the 'University-college dinner at Willis's-rooms, and made a 'most brilliant and effective speech, that I sent him a 'congratulatory note reminding him of our former fellow-'ship. To this he sent me a kind note in reply, and 'which I value very much. I send you copies of these.'*

Dr. Danson to C. D.

* The reader will probably think them worth subjoining. Dr. Danson wrote:—'*April;* 1864. DEAR SIR, On the recent occasion of the U. C. H. 'dinner, you would probably have been amused and somewhat surprised to 'learn that one of those whom you addressed had often accompanied you over 'that "field of forty footsteps" to which you so aptly and amusingly alluded. 'It is now some years since I was accidentally reading a paper written by 'yourself in the *Household Words*, when I was first impressed with the 'idea that the writer described scenes and persons with which I was once 'familiar, and that he must necessarily be the veritable Charles Dickens of '"our school"—the school of Jones! I did not then, however, like to intrude 'myself upon you, for I could hardly hope that you would retain any recollec-'tion of myself; indeed, it was only barely possible you should do so, however 'vividly *I* might recall you in many scenes of fun and frolic of my school days. 'I happened to be present at the dinner of Tuesday last (being interested as 'an old student in the school of the hospital), and was seated very near you;

From Dickens himself I never heard much allusion to the school thus described: but I knew, that, besides being the subject dealt with in *Household Words*, it had supplied some of the lighter traits of Salem-house for *Copperfield;* and that to the fact of one of its tutors being afterwards engaged to teach a boy of Macready's, our common friend, Dickens used to point for one of the illustrations of his favorite theory as to the smallness of the world, and how things and persons apparently the most unlikely to meet were continually knocking up against each other. The employment as his amanuensis of his schoolfellow Tobin dates as early as his Doctors'-commons days, but both my correspondents are mistaken in the impression they appear to have received that Tobin had been previously his fellow-clerk in the same attorney's office. I had thought him more likely to have been accompanied there by another of his boyish acquaintances who became afterwards a soli-

LONDON: 1826-7.

Smallness of the world.

Daniel Tobin and C. D.

'I was tempted during the evening to introduce myself to you, but feared lest 'an explanation such as this in a public room might attract attention and be 'disagreeable to yourself. A man who has attained a position and celebrity 'such as yours will probably have many early associates and acquaintances 'claiming his notice. I beg of you to believe that such is not my object, but 'that having so recently met you I feel myself unable to repress the desire to 'assure you that no one in the room could appreciate the fame and rank you 'have so fairly won, or could wish you more sincerely long life and happiness 'to enjoy them, than, Dear Sir, your old school-fellow, HENRY DANSON.' To this Dickens replied: 'GAD'S HILL PLACE, *Thursday, 5th May*, 1864. 'DEAR SIR, I should have assured you before now that the receipt of your 'letter gave me great pleasure, had I not been too much occupied to have 'leisure for correspondence. I perfectly recollect your name as that of an old 'school-fellow, and distinctly remember your appearance and dress as a boy, 'and believe you had a brother who was unfortunately drowned in the Ser-'pentine. If you had made yourself personally known to me at the dinner, 'I should have been well pleased; though in that case I should have lost your 'modest and manly letter. Faithfully yours, CHARLES DICKENS.'

C. D. to Dr. Danson.

LONDON: 1826-7.

citor, not recollected by either of my correspondents in connection with the school, but whom I frequently met with him in later years, and for whom he had the regard arising out of the habit of such early associations. In this however I have since discovered my own mistake: the truth being that, for a short time after leaving the Wellington-academy, he was at a school kept by a Mr. Dawson in Henrietta-street, Brunswick-square; that here Mr. Mitton, the gentleman to whom I refer, was his schoolfellow; that they were afterwards together for a short time, as fellow-clerks, in Mr. Molloy's office in New-square, Lincoln's-inn; and that, upon Dickens losing this employment, his father had sufficient interest with an attorney of Gray's-inn, Mr. Edward Blackmore, to obtain him a similar engagement. In this capacity of clerk, our only trustworthy glimpse of him we owe to the last-named gentleman, who has described briefly, and I do not doubt authentically, the services so rendered by him to the law. It cannot be said that they were noteworthy, though it might be difficult to find a more distinguished person who has borne the title, unless we make exception for the very father of literature himself, whom Chaucer, with amusing illustration of the way in which words change their meanings, calls 'that conceited clerke Homère.'

At Mr. Dawson's school.

In attorneys' offices.

'I was well acquainted,' writes Mr. Edward Blackmore of Alresford, 'with his parents, and, being then in practice 'in Gray's-inn, they asked me if I could find employment 'for him. He was a bright, clever-looking youth, and I 'took him as a clerk. He came to me in May 1827, and 'left in November 1828; and I have now an account-

Described by his last employer.

'book which he used to keep of petty disbursements 'in the office, in which he charged himself with the 'modest salary first of thirteen shillings and sixpence, and 'afterwards of fifteen shillings a-week. Several incidents 'took place in the office of which he must have been a 'keen observer, as I recognized some of them in his '*Pickwick* and *Nickleby;* and I am much mistaken if 'some of his characters had not their originals in persons 'I well remember. His taste for theatricals was much 'promoted by a fellow-clerk named Potter, since dead, 'with whom he chiefly associated. They took every 'opportunity, then unknown to me, of going together to 'a minor theatre, where (I afterwards heard) they not 'unfrequently engaged in parts. After he left me I saw 'him at times in the lord chancellor's court, taking 'notes of cases as a reporter. I then lost sight of him 'until his *Pickwick* made its appearance.' This letter indicates the position he held at Mr. Blackmore's; and we have but to turn to the passage in *Pickwick* which describes the several grades of attorney's-clerk, to understand it more clearly. He was very far below the articled clerk, who has paid a premium and is attorney in perspective. He was not so high as the salaried clerk, with nearly the whole of his weekly thirty-shillings spent on his personal pleasures. He was not even on the level with his middle-aged copying clerk, always needy and uniformly shabby. He was simply among, however his own nature may have lifted him above, the 'office-lads in their first surtouts, 'who feel a befitting contempt for boys at day-schools, 'club as they go home at night for saveloys and porter,

LONDON: 1827-8.

In Mr. Blackmore's office.

Minor-theatre tastes.

His grade of clerkship.

LONDON: 1828-30.

'and think there's nothing like life.' Thus far, not more or less, had he now reached. He was one of the office-lads.

Self-teaching.

But, even thus, the process of education went on, defying what seemed to interrupt it; and in the amount of his present equipment for his needs of life, what he brought from the Wellington-house academy, or from Mr. Dawson's in Henrietta-street, can have borne but the smallest proportion to his acquirement at Mr. Molloy's and Mr. Blackmore's. Yet to seek to identify, without help from himself, any passages in his books with his boyish experiences at either, would be idle and hopeless enough. In the earliest of his writings, and down to the very latest, he worked exhaustively the field which is opened by an attorney's office to a student of life and manners; but we have not now to deal with his numerous varieties of the *genus* clerk drawn thus for the amusement of others, but with the acquisitions which at present he was storing up for himself from the opportunities such offices opened to him. Nor would it be possible to have better illustrative comment,

The fathers on the son' education.

on all these years, than is furnished by his father's reply to a friend it was now hoped to interest on his behalf, which more than once I have heard him whimsically, but good-humouredly, imitate. 'Pray, Mr. Dickens, where 'was your son educated?' 'Why, indeed, Sir—ha! ha!— 'he may be said to have educated himself!' Of the two kinds of education which Gibbon says that all men who rise above the common level receive; the first, that of his teachers, and the second, more personal and more important, *his own;* he had the advantage only of the last. It nevertheless sufficed for him.

Very nearly another eighteen months were now to be spent mainly in practical preparation for what he was, at this time, led finally to choose as an employment from which a fair income was certain with such talents as he possessed; his father already having taken to it, in these latter years, in aid of the family resources. In his father's house, which was at Hampstead through the first portion of the Mornington-street school time, then in the house out of Seymour-street mentioned by Dr. Danson, and afterwards, upon the elder Dickens going into the gallery, in Bentinck-street, Manchester-square, Charles had continued to live; and, influenced doubtless by the example before him, he took sudden determination to qualify himself thoroughly for what his father was lately become, a newspaper parliamentary reporter. He set resolutely therefore to the study of short-hand; and, for the additional help of such general information about books as a fairly educated youth might be expected to have, as well as to satisfy some higher personal cravings, he became an assiduous attendant in the British-museum reading-room. He would frequently refer to these days as decidedly the usefullest to himself he had ever passed; and judging from the results they must have been so. No man who knew him in later years, and talked to him familiarly of books and things, would have suspected his education in boyhood, almost entirely self-acquired as it was, to have been so rambling or hap-hazard as I have here described it. The secret consisted in this, that, whatever for the time he had to do, he lifted himself, there and then, to the level of; and at no time disregarded the rules that guided the hero

LONDON: 1828-30.

Another employment in prospect.

Studying shorthand.

In British-museum reading-room.

LONDON: 1828-30.

D. C. for C. D.

of his novel. 'Whatever I have tried to do in life, I have 'tried with all my heart to do well. What I have devoted 'myself to, I have devoted myself to completely. Never to 'put one hand to anything on which I could throw my 'whole self, and never to affect depreciation of my work, 'whatever it was, I find now to have been my golden 'rules.'

Of the difficulties that beset his short-hand studies, as well as of what first turned his mind to them, he has told also something in *Copperfield*. He had heard that many men distinguished in various pursuits had begun life by reporting the debates in parliament, and he was not deterred by a friend's warning that the mere mechanical accomplishment for excellence in it might take a few years to master thoroughly: 'a perfect and entire command of the 'mystery of short-hand writing and reading being about 'equal in difficulty to the mastery of six languages.' Undaunted, he plunged into it, self-teaching in this as in graver things; and, having bought Mr. Gurney's half-guinea book, worked steadily his way through its distractions. 'The changes that were rung upon dots, which in 'such a position meant such a thing, and in such another 'position something else entirely different; the wonderful 'vagaries that were played by circles; the unaccountable 'consequences that resulted from marks like flies' legs; 'the tremendous effects of a curve in a wrong place; not 'only troubled my waking hours, but reappeared before 'me in my sleep. When I had groped my way, blindly, 'through these difficulties, and had mastered the alphabet, 'there then appeared a procession of new horrors, called

Preparing for the gallery.

D. C. for C. D.

'arbitrary characters; the most despotic characters I have 'ever known,; who insisted, for instance, that a thing like 'the beginning of a cobweb meant expectation, and that 'a pen-and-ink sky-rocket stood for disadvantageous. 'When I had fixed these wretches in my mind, I found 'that they had driven everything else out of it; then, 'beginning again, I forgot them; while I was picking 'them up, I dropped the other fragments of the system; 'in short, it was almost heart-breaking.' LONDON: 1828-30.

What it was that made it not quite heart-breaking to the hero of the fiction, its readers know; and something of the same kind was now to enter into the actual experience of its writer. First let me say, however, that after subduing to his wants in marvellously quick time this unruly and unaccommodating servant of stenography, what he most desired was still not open to him. 'There 'never *was* such a short-hand writer,' has been often said to me by Mr. Beard, the friend he first made in that line when he entered the gallery, and with whom to the close of his life he maintained the friendliest intercourse. But there was no opening for him in the gallery yet. He had to pass nearly two years as a reporter for one of the offices in Doctors'-commons, practising in this and the other law courts, before he became a sharer in parliamentary toils and triumphs; and what sustained his young hero through something of the same sort of trial, was also his own support. He, too, had his Dora, at apparently the same hopeless elevation; striven for as the one only thing to be attained, and even more unattainable, for neither did he succeed nor happily did she die; but the one idol, Further likeness between D. C. and C. D. Reporting in Doctors'-commons. A real Dora in 1829.

LONDON: 1828-30.

like the other, supplying a motive to exertion for the time, and otherwise opening out to the idolater, both in fact and fiction, a highly unsubstantial, happy, foolish time. I used to laugh and tell him I had no belief in any but the book Dora, until the incident of a sudden reappearance of the real one in his life, nearly six years after *Copperfield* was written, convinced me there had been a more actual foundation for those chapters of his book than I was ready to suppose. Still I would hardly admit it; and, that the matter could possibly affect him then, persisted in a stout refusal to believe. His reply (1855) throws a little light on this juvenile part of his career, and I therefore venture to preserve it.

The Dora of 1829 reappears in 1855.

C. D. to J.F.(1855).

'I don't quite apprehend what you mean by my over-'rating the strength of the feeling of five-and-twenty 'years ago. If you mean of my own feeling, and will 'only think what the desperate intensity of my nature 'is, and that this began when I was Charley's age; that 'it excluded every other idea from my mind for four 'years, at a time of life when four years are equal to 'four times four; and that I went at it with a determi-'nation to overcome all the difficulties, which fairly lifted 'me up into that newspaper life, and floated me away over 'a hundred men's heads: then you are wrong, because 'nothing can exaggerate that. I have positively stood 'amazed at myself ever since!—And so I suffered, and so 'worked, and so beat and hammered away at the mad-'dest romances that ever got into any boy's head and 'stayed there, that to see the mere cause of it all, now, 'loosens my hold upon myself. Without for a moment

An incentive to exertion.

'sincerely believing that it would have been better if we 'had never got separated, I cannot see the occasion of so 'much emotion as I should see any one else. No one 'can imagine in the most distant degree what pain the 'recollection gave me in *Copperfield*. And, just as I can 'never open that book as I open any other book, I cannot 'see the face (even at four-and-forty), or hear the voice, 'without going wandering away over the ashes of all that 'youth and hope in the wildest manner.' More and more plainly seen, however, in the light of four-and-forty, the romance glided visibly away, its work being fairly done; and, at the close of the month following that in which this letter was written, during which he had very quietly made a formal call with his wife at his youthful Dora's house, and contemplated with a calm equanimity, in the hall, her stuffed favourite Jip, he began the fiction in which there was a Flora to set against its predecessor's Dora, both derived from the same original. The fancy had a comic humour in it he found it impossible to resist, but it was kindly and pleasant to the last;* and if the

LONDON: 1828-30.

C. D. as to D. C.

A romance fading.

Dora of *Copperfield* changed into Flora of *Little Dorrit*.

* I take other fanciful allusions to the lady from two of his occasional writings. The first from his visit to the city churches (written during the Dombey time, when he had to select a church for the marriage of Florence): 'Its drowsy cadence soon lulls the three old women asleep, and the unmar- C. D. 'ried tradesman sits looking out at window, and the married tradesman sits 'looking at his wife's bonnet, and the lovers sit looking at one another, so 'superlatively happy, that I mind when I, turned of eighteen, went with my 'Angelica to a city church on account of a shower (by this special coincidence 'that it was in Huggin-lane), and when I said to my Angelica, "Let the '"blessed event, Angelica, occur at no altar but this!" and when my Angelica 'consented that it should occur at no other—which it certainly never did, for 'it never occurred anywhere. And O, Angelica, what has become of you, 'this present Sunday morning when I can't attend to the sermon; and, more

LONDON: 1828—30.

Ashes of youth and hope.

later picture showed him plenty to laugh at in this retrospect of his youth, there was nothing he thought of more tenderly than the earlier, as long as he was conscious of anything.

C. D.

'difficult question than that, what has become of Me as I was when I sat by 'your side!' The second, from his pleasant paper on birthdays:—'I gave 'a party on the occasion. She was there. It is unnecessary to name Her, 'more particularly; She was older than I, and had pervaded every chink and 'crevice of my mind for three or four years. I had held volumes of Imaginary 'Conversations with her mother on the subject of our union, and I had written 'letters more in number than Horace Walpole's, to that discreet woman, 'soliciting her daughter's hand in marriage. I had never had the remotest 'intention of sending any of those letters; but to write them, and after a few 'days tear them up, had been a sublime occupation.'

CHAPTER IV.

REPORTERS' GALLERY AND NEWSPAPER LITERATURE.

1831—1835.

DICKENS was nineteen years old when at last he entered the gallery. His father, with whom he still lived in Bentinck-street, had already, as we have seen, joined the gallery as a reporter for the *Morning Chronicle*, and was now in the more comfortable circumstances derived from the addition to his official pension which this praiseworthy labour ensured to him; but his own engagement on that journal dates somewhat later. His first parliamentary service was given to the *True Sun*, a journal which had then on its editorial staff some dear friends of mine, through whom I became myself a contributor to it, and afterwards, in common with all concerned, whether in its writing, reporting, printing, or publishing, a sharer in its difficulties. The most formidable of these arrived one day in a general strike of the reporters; and I well remember noticing at this dread time, on the staircase of the magnificent mansion we were lodged in, a young man of my own age whose keen animation of look would have arrested attention anywhere, and whose name, upon enquiry, I then for the first time heard. It was coupled with the fact

LONDON: 1831-2.

Reporting for the *True Sun*.

C. D. first seen by me.

LONDON: 1832-4.

which gave it interest even then, that 'young Dickens' had been spokesman for the recalcitrant reporters, and conducted their case triumphantly. He was afterwards during two sessions engaged for the *Mirror of Parliament*, which one of his uncles by the mother's side originated and conducted; and finally, in his twenty-third year, he became a reporter for the *Morning Chronicle*.

Reporting for *Mirror* and *Chronicle*.

1834-5.

A step far more momentous to him (though then he did not know it) he had taken shortly before. In the January number for 1834 of what then was called the *Old Monthly Magazine*, his first published piece of writing had seen the light. He has described himself dropping this paper (not, Mr. Minns and his Cousin, as he thought, but Mrs. Joseph Porter over the Way, as a reference to the magazine shows) stealthily one evening at twilight, with fear and trembling, into a dark letter-box in a dark office up a dark court in Fleet-street; and he has told his agitation when it appeared in all the glory of print. 'On 'which occasion I walked down to Westminster-hall, and 'turned into it for half an hour, because my eyes were so 'dimmed with joy and pride, that they could not bear the 'street, and were not fit to be seen there.' He had purchased the magazine at a shop in the Strand; and exactly two years afterwards, in the younger member of a publishing firm who had called, at the chambers in Furnival's-inn to which he had moved soon after entering the gallery, with the proposal that originated *Pickwick*, he recognized the person he had bought that magazine from, and whom before or since he had never seen.

First published piece.

C. D. *loq.*

'Smallness of the world.'

This interval of two years more than comprised what

remained of his career in the gallery and the engagements connected with it; but that this occupation was of the utmost importance in its influence on his life, in the discipline of his powers as well as of his character, there can be no doubt whatever. 'To the wholesome training of 'severe newspaper work, when I was a very young man, 'I constantly refer my first successes,' he said to the New York editors when he last took leave of them. It opened to him a wide and varied range of experience, which his wonderful observation, exact as it was humorous, made entirely his own. He saw the last of the old coaching days, and of the old inns that were a part of them; but it will be long before the readers of his living page see the last of the life of either. 'There never was,' he once wrote to me (in 1845), 'anybody connected with newspapers, who, in the 'same space of time, had so much express and post-chaise 'experience as I. And what gentlemen they were to 'serve, in such things, at the old *Morning Chronicle!* 'Great or small it did not matter. I have had to charge 'for half-a-dozen break-downs in half-a-dozen times as 'many miles. I have had to charge for the damage of a 'great-coat from the drippings of a blazing wax-candle, 'in writing through the smallest hours of the night in a 'swift-flying carriage and pair. I have had to charge for all 'sorts of breakages fifty times in a journey without ques-'tion, such being the ordinary results of the pace which 'we went at. I have charged for broken hats, broken 'luggage, broken chaises, broken harness—everything but 'a broken head, which is the only thing they would have 'grumbled to pay for.'

LONDON: 1834-6.

Discipline of reporting days.

C. D. to J. F. (1845).

Experiences at *Morning Chronicle.*

LONDON: 1834-6.

His own sketch of life as a reporter.

Something to the same effect he said publicly twenty years later, on the occasion of his presiding, in May 1865, at the second annual dinner of the newspaper-press-fund, when he condensed within the compass of his speech a summary of the whole of his reporting life. 'I am not 'here,' he said, 'advocating the case of a mere ordinary 'client of whom I have little or no knowledge. I hold 'a brief to-night for my brothers. I went into the 'gallery of the house of commons as a parliamentary 'reporter when I was a boy, and I left it—I can hardly 'believe the inexorable truth—nigh thirty years ago. I 'have pursued the calling of a reporter under circum-'stances of which many of my brethren here can form no 'adequate conception. I have often transcribed for the 'printer, from my shorthand notes, important public 'speeches in which the strictest accuracy was required, 'and a mistake in which would have been to a young 'man severely compromising, writing on the palm of my 'hand, by the light of a dark lantern, in a post-chaise and 'four, galloping through a wild country, and through the 'dead of the night, at the then surprising rate of fifteen 'miles an hour. The very last time I was at Exeter, I 'strolled into the castle-yard there to identify, for the 'amusement of a friend, the spot on which I once "took," 'as we used to call it, an election speech of Lord John 'Russell at the Devon contest, in the midst of a lively fight 'maintained by all the vagabonds in that division of the 'county, and under such a pelting rain, that I remember 'two good-natured colleagues, who chanced to be at 'leisure, held a pocket-handkerchief over my note-book,

Expresses.

'after the manner of a state canopy in an ecclesiastical 'procession. I have worn my knees by writing on them 'on the old back row of the old gallery of the old house 'of commons; and I have worn my feet by standing to 'write in a preposterous pen in the old house of lords, 'where we used to be huddled together like so many 'sheep—kept in waiting, say, until the woolsack might 'want re-stuffing. Returning home from exciting political 'meetings in the country to the waiting press in London, 'I do verily believe I have been upset in almost every 'description of vehicle known in this country. I have 'been, in my time, belated on miry by-roads, towards the 'small hours, forty or fifty miles from London, in a wheel-'less carriage, with exhausted horses and drunken post-'boys, and have got back in time for publication, to be 'received with never-forgotten compliments by the late 'Mr. Black, coming in the broadest of Scotch from the 'broadest of hearts I ever knew. These trivial things 'I mention as an assurance to you that I never have for-'gotten the fascination of that old pursuit. The pleasure 'that I used to feel in the rapidity and dexterity of its 'exercise has never faded out of my breast. Whatever 'little cunning of hand or head I took to it, or acquired 'in it, I have so retained as that I fully believe I could 'resume it to-morrow, very little the worse from long 'disuse. To this present year of my life, when I sit in 'this hall, or where not, hearing a dull speech (the phe-'nomenon does occur), I sometimes beguile the tedium of 'the moment by mentally following the speaker in the 'old, old way; and sometimes, if you can believe me, I

LONDON: 1834-6.

Houses of parliament before Barry.

A reporter's vicissitudes.

John Black of the *Chronicle*.

Imaginary note-taking.

LONDON: 1834-6.

'even find my hand going on the table-cloth, taking an 'imaginary note of it all.' The latter I have known him do frequently. It was indeed a quite ordinary habit with him.

Mr. James Grant's recollections of C. D.

Mr. James Grant, a writer who was himself in the gallery with Dickens, and who states that among its eighty or ninety reporters he occupied the very highest rank, not merely for accuracy in reporting but for marvellous quickness in transcribing, has lately also told us that while there he was exceedingly reserved in his manners, and that, though showing the usual courtesies to all he was concerned with in his duties, the only personal intimacy he formed was with Mr. Thomas Beard, then reporting for the *Morning Herald*. I have already mentioned the friendly and familiar relations maintained with this gentleman to the close of his life; and in confirmation of Mr. Grant's statement I can further say that the only other associate of these early reporting days, to whom I ever heard him refer with special regard, was the late Mr. Vincent Dowling, many years editor of *Bell's Life*, with whom he did not continue much personal intercourse, but of whose character as well as talents he had formed a very high opinion. Nor is there anything to add to the notice of these days which the reader's fancy may not easily supply. A letter has been kept as written by him while engaged on one of his 'expresses;' but it is less for its saying anything new, than for its confirming with a pleasant vividness what has been said already, that its contents will justify mention here.

Mr. Thomas Beard.

Mr. Vincent Dowling.

He writes, on a 'Tuesday morning' in May 1835, from

the Bush-inn, Bristol; the occasion that has taken him to the west, as chief of a reporting party, being Lord John Russell's Devonshire contest above-named, and his associate-chief being Mr. Beard, the *Herald* having joined the *Chronicle* in this particular express. He expects to forward 'the conclusion of Russell's dinner' by Cooper's company's coach leaving the Bush at half-past six next morning; and by the first Ball's coach on Thursday morning he will forward the report of the Bath dinner, indorsing the parcel for immediate delivery, with extra rewards for the porter. Beard is to go over to Bath next morning. He is himself to come back by the mail from Marlborough; he has no doubt, if Lord John makes a speech of any ordinary dimensions, it can be done by the time Marlborough is reached; 'and taking into consideration 'the immense importance of having the addition of 'saddle horses from thence, it is, beyond all doubt, worth 'an effort. . . . I need not say,' he continues, 'that it will be-'sharp work and will require two of us; for we shall both 'be up the whole of the previous night, and shall have to 'sit up all night again to get it off in time.' He adds that as soon as they have had a little sleep they will return to town as quickly as they can: but they have, if the express succeeds, to stop at sundry places along the road to pay money and notify satisfaction. And so, for himself and Beard, he is his editor's very sincerely.

BRISTOL: 1835. An express expedition. Letter of C. D. during Devon contest. Sharp-work.

Another anecdote of these reporting days, with its sequel, may be added from his own alleged relation, in which however mistakes occur that it seems strange he should have made. The story, as told, is that the late

C. D. and Mr. Stanley.

LONDON: 1834-6.

Stanley's speech against O'Connell.

Lord Derby, when Mr. Stanley, had on some important occasion made a speech which all the reporters found it necessary greatly to abridge; that its essential points had nevertheless been so well given in the *Chronicle* that Mr. Stanley, having need of it for himself in greater detail, had sent a request to the reporter to meet him in Carlton-house-terrace and take down the entire speech; that Dickens attended and did the work accordingly, much to Mr. Stanley's satisfaction; and that, on his dining with Mr. Gladstone in recent years, and finding the aspect of the dining-room strangely familiar, he discovered afterwards on enquiry that it was there he had taken the speech. The story, as it actually occurred, is connected with the brief life of the *Mirror of Parliament*. It was not at any special desire of Mr. Stanley's, but for that new record of the debates, which had been started by one of the uncles of Dickens and professed to excel *Hansard* in giving verbatim reports, that the famous speech against O'Connell was taken as described. The young reporter went to the room in Carlton-terrace because the work of his uncle Barrow's publication required to be done there; and if, in later years, the great author was in the same room as the guest of the prime minister, it must have been but a month or two before he died, when for the first time he visited and breakfasted with Mr. Gladstone.

Re-reported for the *Mirror of Parliament*.

The mention of his career in the gallery may close with the incident. I will only add that his observation while there had not led him to form any high opinion of the house of commons or its heroes; and that, of the Pick-

wickian sense which so often takes the place of common sense in our legislature, he omitted no opportunity of declaring his contempt at every part of his life. LONDON: 1835.

The other occupation had meanwhile not been lost sight of, and for this we are to go back a little. Since the first sketch appeared in the *Monthly Magazine*, nine others have enlivened the pages of later numbers of the same magazine, the last in February 1835, and that which appeared in the preceding August having first had the signature of Boz. This was the nickname of a pet child, his youngest brother Augustus, whom in honour of the *Vicar of Wakefield* he had dubbed Moses, which being facetiously pronounced through the nose became Boses, and being shortened became Boz. 'Boz was a very familiar household word to me, long before I was an author, and so I came to adopt it.' Thus had he fully invented his Sketches by Boz before they were even so called, or any one was ready to give much attention to them; and the next invention needful to himself was some kind of payment in return for them. The magazine was owned as well as conducted at this time by a Mr. Holland, who had come back from Bolivar's South American campaigns with the rank of captain, and had hoped to make it a popular mouthpiece for his ardent liberalism. But this hope, as well as his own health, quite failed; and he had sorrowfully to decline receiving any more of the sketches when they had to cease as voluntary offerings. I do not think that either he or the magazine lived many weeks after an evening I passed with him in Doughty-street in 1837, when he spoke in a very touching way of the failure

Nine sketches in the *Monthly*.

Origin of "Boz."

Captain Holland.

LONDON: 1835-6.

of this and other enterprises of his life, and of the help that Dickens had been to him.

Nothing thus being forthcoming from the *Monthly*, it was of course but natural the sketches too should cease to be forthcoming; and, even before the above-named February number appeared, a new opening had been found for them. An evening off-shoot to the *Morning Chronicle* had been lately in hand; and to a countryman of Black's engaged in the preparations for it, Mr. George Hogarth, Dickens was communicating from his rooms in Furnival's-inn, on the evening of Tuesday the 20th of January 1835, certain hopes and fancies he had formed. This was the beginning of his knowledge of an accomplished and kindly man, with whose family his relations were soon to become so intimate as to have an influence on all his future career. Mr. Hogarth had asked him, as a favour to himself, to write an original sketch for the first number of the enterprise, and in writing back to say with what readiness he should comply, and how anxiously he should desire to do his best for the person who had made the request, he mentioned what had arisen in his mind. It had occurred to him that he might not be unreasonably or improperly trespassing farther on Mr. Hogarth, if, trusting to his kindness to refer the application to the proper quarter, he begged to ask whether it was probable, if he commenced a regular series of articles under some attractive title for the *Evening Chronicle*, its conductors would think he had any claim to *some* additional remuneration (of course, of no great amount) for doing so. In short, he wished to put it to the proprietors—first, whether

Mr. George Hogarth.

Sketches continued in *Evening Chronicle*.

a continuation of some chapters of light papers in the style of his street-sketches would be considered of use to the new journal; and secondly, if so, whether they would not think it fair and reasonable that, taking his share of the ordinary reporting business of the *Chronicle* besides, he should receive something for the papers beyond his ordinary salary as a reporter? The request was thought fair, he began the sketches, and his salary was raised from five to seven guineas a week.

LONDON: 1835-6.

Salary raised.

They went on, with undiminished spirit and freshness, throughout the year; and much as they were talked of outside as well as in the world of newspapers, nothing in connection with them delighted the writer half so much as the hearty praise of his own editor. Mr. Black is one of the men who have passed without recognition out of a world their labours largely benefited, but with those who knew him no man was so popular, as well for his broad kindly humour, as for his honest great-hearted enjoyment of whatever was excellent in others. Dickens to the last remembered, that it was most of all the cordial help of this good old mirth-loving man, which had started him joyfully on his career of letters. It was John Black that flung the slipper after me, he would often say. 'Dear old Black! my first hearty out-and-out appreciator,' is an expression in one of his letters written to me in the year he died.

Mr. John Black.

Black's timely help.

CHAPTER V.

FIRST BOOK AND ORIGIN OF PICKWICK.

1836.

LONDON: 1836.

THE opening of 1836 found him collecting into two volumes the first series of *Sketches by Boz*, of which he had sold the copyright for a conditional payment of (I think) a hundred and fifty pounds to a young publisher named Macrone, whose acquaintance he had made through Mr. Ainsworth a few weeks before.* At this time also,

First series of *Sketches*.

Fancy-piece by Mr. Willis:

* To this date belongs a visit paid him at Furnival's-inn in Mr. Macrone's company, by the notorious Mr. N. P. Willis, who calls him 'a young paragraphist for the *Morning Chronicle*,' and thus sketches his residence and himself. 'In the most crowded part of Holborn, within a door or two of the Bull-and-mouth inn, we pulled up at the entrance of a large building used for lawyers' chambers. I followed by a long flight of stairs to an upper storey, and was ushered into an uncarpeted and bleak-looking room, with a deal table, two or three chairs and a few books, a small boy and Mr. Dickens, for the contents. I was only struck at first with one thing (and I made a memorandum of it that evening as the strongest instance I had seen of English obsequiousness to employers), the degree to which the poor author was overpowered with the honour of his publisher's visit! I remember saying to myself, as I sat down on a ricketty chair, "My good fellow, if you "were in America with that fine face and your ready quill, you would have "no need to be condescended to by a publisher." Dickens was dressed very much as he has since described Dick Swiveller, *minus* the swell look. His hair was cropped close to his head, his clothes scant, though jauntily cut, and after changing a ragged office-coat for a shabby blue, he stood by the door, collarless and buttoned up, the very personification, I thought, of a

a poor English author.

we are told in a letter before quoted, the editorship of the *Monthly Magazine* having come into Mr. James Grant's hands, this gentleman, applying to him through its previous editor to know if he would again contribute to it, learnt two things: the first that he was going to be married, and the second that having entered into an arrangement to write a monthly serial, his duties in future would leave him small spare time. Both pieces of news were soon confirmed. The *Times* of the 26th of March, 1836, gave notice that on the 31st would be published the first shilling number of the *Posthumous Papers of the Pickwick Club, edited by Boz;* and the same journal of a few days later announced that on the 2nd of April Mr. Charles Dickens had married Catherine, the eldest daughter of Mr. George Hogarth, whom already we have met as his fellow-worker on the *Chronicle*. The honeymoon was passed in the neighbourhood to which at all times of interest in his life he turned with a strange recurring fondness; and while the young couple are at the quiet little village of Chalk, on the road between Gravesend and Rochester, I will relate exactly the origin of the ever-memorable Mr. Pickwick.

LONDON: 1836.

First number of *Pickwick*.

Marriage of Dickens.

A young publishing house had started recently, among other enterprises ingenious rather than important, a Library of Fiction; among the authors they wished to enlist in it was the writer of the sketches in the *Monthly;*

Overtures from Chapman and Hall.

'close sailer to the wind.' I remember, while my friend lived, our laughing heartily at this description, hardly a word of which is true; and I give it now as no unfair specimen of the kind of garbage that since his death also has been served up only too plentifully, by some of his own as well as by others of Mr. Willis's countrymen.

LONDON: 1836.

and, to the extent of one paper during the past year, they had effected this through their editor, Mr. Charles Whitehead, a very ingenious and very unfortunate man. 'I 'was not aware,' wrote the elder member of the firm to Dickens, thirteen years later, in a letter to which reference was made * in the preface to *Pickwick* in one of his later editions, 'that you were writing in the *Chronicle*, 'or what your name was; but Whitehead, who was an old '*Monthly* man, recollected it, and got you to write The 'Tuggs's at Ramsgate.'

Mr. Seymour and his *Squib Annual.*

And now comes another person on the scene. 'In 'November 1835,' continues Mr. Chapman, 'we published 'a little book called the *Squib Annual*, with plates by 'Seymour; and it was during my visit to him to see after 'them, that he said he should like to do a series of cockney-'sporting plates of a superior sort to those he had already 'published. I said I thought they might do, if accom-'panied by letter-press and published in monthly parts; 'and this being agreed to, we wrote to the author of '*Three Courses and a Dessert*, and proposed it; but 'receiving no answer the scheme dropped for some months, 'till Seymour said he wished us to decide, as another job 'had offered which would fully occupy his time; and it

* Not quoted in detail, on that or any other occasion; though referred to. It was however placed in my hands, for use if occasion should arise, when Dickens went to America in 1867. The letter bears date the 7th July, 1849, and was Mr. Chapman's answer to the question Dickens had asked him, whether the account of the origin of *Pickwick* which he had given in the preface to the cheap edition in 1847 was not strictly correct? 'It is so 'correctly described,' was Mr. Chapman's opening remark, 'that I can throw 'but little additional light on it.' The name of his hero, I may add, Dickens took from that of a celebrated coach-proprietor of Bath.

Mr. Pickwick of Bath.

'was on this we decided to ask you to do it. Having 'opened already a connection with you for our Library of 'Fiction, we naturally applied to you to do the *Pickwick*; 'but I do not think we even mentioned our intention to 'Mr. Seymour, and I am quite sure that from the 'beginning to the end nobody but yourself had anything 'whatever to do with it. Our prospectus was out at 'the end of February, and it had all been arranged before 'that date.'

LONDON: 1836. Origin of *Pickwick*.

The member of the firm who carried the application to him in Furnival's-inn, was not the writer of this letter, but Mr. Hall, who had sold him two years before, not knowing that he was the purchaser, the magazine in which his first effusion was printed; and he has himself described what passed at the interview. 'The idea propounded to 'me was that the monthly something should be a vehicle 'for certain plates to be executed by Mr. Seymour; and 'there was a notion, either on the part of that admirable 'humorous artist, or of my visitor, that a NIMROD CLUB, 'the members of which were to go out shooting, fishing, and 'so forth, and getting themselves into difficulties through 'their want of dexterity, would be the best means of intro- 'ducing these. I objected, on consideration, that although 'born and partly bred in the country I was no great sports- 'man, except in regard to all kinds of locomotion; that 'the idea was not novel, and had already been much used; 'that it would be infinitely better for the plates to arise 'naturally out of the text: and that I would like to take 'my own way, with a freer range of English scenes and 'people, and was afraid I should ultimately do so in any

Mr. Hall at Furnival's-inn.

C. D. *loq.*

What was proposed by others.

What was substituted by himself.

LONDON: 1836.

C. D. *loq.*

'case, whatever course I might prescribe to myself at 'starting. My views being deferred to, I thought of 'Mr. Pickwick, and wrote the first number; from the 'proof sheets of which Mr. Seymour made his drawing 'of the club and his happy portrait of its founder. I 'connected Mr. Pickwick with a club, because of the 'original suggestion; and I put in Mr. Winkle expressly 'for the use of Mr. Seymour.'

Mr. Chapman's confirmation (1849).

Mr. Hall was dead when this statement was first made, in the preface to the cheap edition in 1847; but Mr. Chapman clearly recollected his partner's account of the interview, and confirmed every part of it, in his letter of 1849,* with one exception. In giving Mr. Seymour credit

False claims put forward.

C. D.'s refutation.

* The appeal was then made to him because of recent foolish statements by members of Mr. Seymour's family, which Dickens thus contradicted: 'It is 'with great unwillingness that I notice some intangible and incoherent asser- 'tions which have been made, professedly on behalf of Mr. Seymour, to the 'effect that he had some share in the invention of this book, or of anything 'in it, not faithfully described in the foregoing paragraph. With the modera- 'tion that is due equally to my respect for the memory of a brother-artist, 'and to my self-respect, I confine myself to placing on record here the facts— 'That, Mr. Seymour never originated or suggested an incident, a phrase, 'or a word, to be found in this book. That, Mr. Seymour died when only 'twenty-four pages of this book were published, and when assuredly not forty- 'eight were written. That, I believe I never saw Mr. Seymour's hand-writing 'in my life. That, I never saw Mr. Seymour but once in my life, and that 'was on the night but one before his death, when he certainly offered no 'suggestion whatsoever. That I saw him then in the presence of two persons, 'both living, perfectly acquainted with all these facts, and whose written 'testimony to them I possess. Lastly, that Mr. Edward Chapman (the 'survivor of the original firm of Chapman and Hall) has set down in writing, 'for similar preservation, his personal knowledge of the origin and progress of 'this book, of the monstrosity of the baseless assertions in question, and '(tested by details) even of the self-evident impossibility of there being any 'truth in them.' The 'written testimony' alluded to is also in my possession, having been enclosed to me by Dickens, in 1867, with Mr. Chapman's letter here referred to.

for the figure by which all the habitable globe knows Mr. Pickwick, and which certainly at the outset helped to make him a reality, it had given the artist too much. The reader will hardly be so startled as I was on coming to the closing line of Mr. Chapman's confirmatory letter. 'As this letter is to be historical, I may as well claim 'what little belongs to me in the matter, and that is the 'figure of Pickwick. Seymour's first sketch was of a long, 'thin man. The present immortal one he made from my 'description of a friend of mine at Richmond, a fat old 'beau who would wear, in spite of the ladies' protests, drab 'tights and black gaiters. His name was John Foster.'

LONDON: 1836.

The original of Mr. Pickwick in figure and name.

On the coincidences, resemblances, and surprises of life, Dickens liked especially to dwell, and few things moved his fancy so pleasantly. The world, he would say, was so much smaller than we thought it; we were all so connected by fate without knowing it; people supposed to be far apart were so constantly elbowing each other; and to-morrow bore so close a resemblance to nothing half so much as to yesterday. Here were the only two leading incidents of his own life before I knew him, his marriage and the first appearance of his Pickwick; and it turned out after all that I had some shadowy association with both. He was married on the anniversary of my birthday, and the original of the figure of Mr. Pickwick bore my name.*

Surprises of life, and smallness of the world.

The first number had not yet appeared when his

* Whether Mr. Chapman spelt the name correctly, or has unconsciously deprived his fat beau of the letter 'r,' I cannot say; but experience tells me that the latter is probable. I have been trying all my life to get my own name spelt correctly, and have only very imperfectly succeeded.

LONDON: 1836.

Publication of the *Sketches*.

Sketches by Boz, Illustrative of Every-Day Life and Every-Day People, came forth in two duodecimos with some capital cuts by Cruikshank, and with a preface in which he spoke of the nervousness he should have had in venturing alone before the public, and of his delight in getting the help of Cruikshank, who had frequently contributed to the success, though his well-earned reputation rendered it impossible for him ever to have shared the hazard, of similar undertakings. It very soon became apparent that there was no hazard here. The *Sketches* were much more talked about than the first two or three numbers of *Pickwick*, and I remember still with what hearty praise the book was first named to me by my dear friend Albany Fonblanque, as keen and clear a judge as ever lived either of books or men. Richly did it merit all the praise it had, and more, I will add, than he was ever disposed to give to it himself. He decidedly underrated it. He gave, in subsequent writings, so much more perfect form and fullness to everything it contained, that he did not care to credit himself with the marvel of having yet so early anticipated so much. But the first sprightly runnings of his genius are undoubtedly here. Mr. Bumble is in the parish sketches, and Mr. Dawkins the dodger in the Old-bailey scenes. There is laughter and fun to excess, never misapplied; there are the minute points and shades of character, with all the discrimination and nicety of detail, afterwards so famous; there is everywhere the most perfect ease and skill of handling. The observation shown throughout is nothing short of wonderful. Things are painted literally as they are; and,

The book illustrated by Cruikshank.

First sprightly runnings.

whatever the picture, whether of every-day vulgar, shabby genteel, or downright low, with neither the condescending air which is affectation, nor the too familiar one which is slang. The book altogether is a perfectly unaffected, unpretentious, honest performance. Under its manly sensible straightforward vein of talk, there is running at the same time a natural flow of sentiment never sentimental, of humour always easy and unforced, and of pathos for the most part dramatic or picturesque, under which lay the germ of what his mature genius took afterwards most delight in. Of course there are inequalities in it, and some things that would have been better away: but it is a book that might have stood its ground, even if it had stood alone, as containing unusually truthful observation of a sort of life between the middle class and the low, which, having few attractions for bookish observers, was quite unhacknied ground. It had otherwise also the very special merit of being in no respect bookish or commonplace in its descriptions of the old city with which its writer was so familiar. It was a picture of every-day London at its best and worst, in its humours and enjoyments as well as its sufferings and sins, pervaded everywhere not only with the absolute reality of the things depicted, but also with that subtle sense and mastery of feeling which gives to the reader's sympathies invariably right direction, and awakens consideration, tenderness, and kindness precisely for those who most need such help.

LONDON: 1836.

Its success well merited.

The *Sketches* characterized.

Between the first and the second numbers of *Pickwick*, the artist, Mr. Seymour, died by his own hand; and the

Death of Mr. Seymour.

LONDON: 1836.

number came out with three instead of four illustrations. Dickens had seen the unhappy man only once, forty-eight hours before his death; when he went to Furnival's-inn with an etching for the 'stroller's-tale' in that number, which, altered at Dickens's suggestion, he brought away again for the few further touches that occupied him to a late hour of the night before he destroyed himself. A notice attached to the number informed the public of this latter fact. There was at first a little difficulty in replacing him, and for a single number Mr. Buss was interposed. But before the fourth number a choice had been made, which as time went on was so thoroughly justified, that through the greater part of the wonderful career which was then beginning the connection was kept up, and Mr. Hablot Browne's name is not unworthily associated with the masterpieces of Dickens's genius. An incident which I heard related by Mr. Thackeray at one of the royal-academy dinners belongs to this time. 'I can remember 'when Mr. Dickens was a very young man, and had 'commenced delighting the world with some charming 'humorous works in covers which were coloured light 'green and came out once a month, that this young man 'wanted an artist to illustrate his writings; and I recollect 'walking up to his chambers in Furnival's-inn, with two 'or three drawings in my hand, which, strange to say, he 'did not find suitable.' Dickens has himself described another change now made in the publication. 'We 'started with a number of twenty-four pages and four 'illustrations. Mr. Seymour's sudden and lamented death 'before the second number was published, brought about

Mr. Buss interposed.

Mr. Hablot Browne chosen.

Changes in the *Pickwick* numbers.

'a quick decision upon a point already in agitation; the 'number became one of thirty-two pages with only two 'illustrations, and remained so to the end.' LONDON: 1836.

The Session of 1836 terminated his connection with the gallery, and some fruits of his increased leisure showed themselves before the close of the year. His eldest sister's musical attainments and connections had introduced him to many cultivators and professors of that art; he was led to take much interest in Mr. Braham's enterprise at the St. James's-theatre; and in aid of it he wrote a farce for Mr. Harley, founded upon one of his sketches, and the story and songs for an opera composed by his friend Mr. Hullah. Both the *Strange Gentleman*, acted in September, and the *Village Coquettes*, produced in December, 1836, had a good success; and the last is memorable to me for having brought me first into personal communication with Dickens. Reporting days close. *Strange Gentleman* and *Village Coquettes*.

CHAPTER VI.

WRITING THE PICKWICK PAPERS.

1837.

LONDON: 1837.

THE first letter I had from him was at the close of 1836 from Furnival's-inn, when he sent me the book of his opera of the *Village Coquettes*, which had been published by Mr. Bentley; and this was followed, two months later, by his collected *Sketches*, both first and second series; which he desired me to receive 'as a very small 'testimony of the donor's regard and obligations, as well 'as of his desire to cultivate and avail himself of a friend-'ship which has been so pleasantly thrown in his way.... 'In short, if you will receive them for my sake and not 'for their own, you will very greatly oblige me.' I had met him in the interval at the house of our common friend Mr. Ainsworth, and I remember vividly the impression then made upon me.

C. D. to J. F.

As he was 35 years ago.

Very different was his face in those days from that which photography has made familiar to the present generation. A look of youthfulness first attracted you, and then a candour and openness of expression which made you sure of the qualities within. The features were very good. He had a capital forehead, a firm nose with full

wide nostril, eyes wonderfully beaming with intellect and running over with humour and cheerfulness, and a rather prominent mouth strongly marked with sensibility. The head was altogether well-formed and symmetrical, and the air and carriage of it were extremely spirited. The hair so scant and grizzled in later days was then of a rich brown and most luxuriant abundance, and the bearded face of his last two decades had hardly a vestige of hair or whisker; but there was that in the face as I first recollect it which no time could change, and which remained implanted on it unalterably to the last. This was the quickness, keenness, and practical power, the eager, restless, energetic outlook on each several feature, that seemed to tell so little of a student or writer of books, and so much of a man of action and business in the world. Light and motion flashed from every part of it. *It was as if made of steel,* was said of it, four or five years after the time to which I am referring, by a most original and delicate observer, the late Mrs. Carlyle. 'What a 'face is his to meet in a drawing-room!' wrote Leigh Hunt to me, the morning after I made them known to each other. 'It has the life and soul in it of fifty human 'beings.' In such sayings are expressed not alone the restless and resistless vivacity and force of which I have spoken, but that also which lay beneath them of steadiness and hard endurance.

LONDON: 1837.

Personal description.

Remark of Mrs. Carlyle.

Of Leigh Hunt.

Several unsuccessful efforts were made by each to get the other to his house before the door of either was opened at last. A son had been born to him on twelfth-day (the 6th January 1837), and before the close of the

Birth of his eldest son.

CHALK: GRAVESEND: 1837.

following month he and his wife were in the lodgings at Chalk they had occupied after their marriage. Early in March there is a letter from him accounting for the failure of a promise to call on me because of 'a crew of 'house agents and attornies' through whom he had nearly missed his conveyance to Chalk, and been made 'more 'than half wild besides.' This was his last letter from Furnival's-inn. In that same month he went to 48, Doughty-street; and in his first letter to me from that address, dated at the close of the month, there is this passage. 'We only called upon you a second time in the hope of 'getting you to dine with us, and were much disappointed 'not to find you. I have delayed writing a reply to your 'note, meaning to call upon you. I have been so much 'engaged, however, in the pleasant occupation of "moving" 'that I have not had time; and I am obliged at last to 'write and say that I have been long engaged to the '*Pickwick* publishers to a dinner in honour of that hero 'which comes off to-morrow. I am consequently unable 'to accept your kind invite, which I frankly own I should 'have liked much better.'

Last letter from Furnival's-inn.

First from Doughty-street.

C. D. to J. F.

That Saturday's celebration of his twelfth number, the anniversary of the birth of *Pickwick*, preceded by but a few weeks a personal sorrow which profoundly moved him. His wife's next younger sister, Mary, who lived with them, and by sweetness of nature even more than by graces of person had made herself the ideal of his life, died with a terrible suddenness that for the time completely bore him down.* His grief and suffer-

A long-remembered sorrow.

* Her epitaph, written by him, remains upon a gravestone in the cemetery

ing were intense, and affected him, as will be seen, through many after years. The publication of *Pickwick* was interrupted for two months, the effort of writing it not being possible to him. He moved for change of scene to Hampstead, and here, at the close of May, I visited him, and became first his guest. More than ordinarily susceptible at the moment to all kindliest impressions, his heart opened itself to mine. I left him as much his friend, and as entirely in his confidence, as if I had known him for years. Nor had many weeks passed before he addressed to me from Doughty-street words which it is my sorrowful pride to remember have had literal fulfilment. 'I look back with unmingled pleasure to every 'link which each ensuing week has added to the chain 'of our attachment. It shall go hard, I hope, ere any-'thing but Death impairs the toughness of a bond now so 'firmly riveted.' It remained unweakened till death came.

HAMPSTEAD: 1837.

visit him.

C. D. to J. F.

There were circumstances that drew us at once into frequent and close communication. What the sudden popularity of his writings implied, was known to others some time before it was known to himself; and he was only now becoming gradually conscious of all the disadvantage this had placed him at. He would have laughed if, at this outset of his wonderful fortune in literature, his genius acknowledged by all without misgiving, young, popular, and prosperous, any one had compared him to the luckless men of letters of former days, whose common fate was to be sold into a slavery

Hasty compacts with publishers.

at Kensal-green. 'Young, beautiful, and good, God numbered her among 'his angels at the early age of seventeen.'

LONDON: 1837.

which their later lives were passed in vain endeavours to escape from. Not so was his fate to be, yet something of it he was doomed to experience. He had unwittingly sold himself into a quasi-bondage, and had to purchase his liberty at a heavy cost, after considerable suffering.

Self-sold into bondage.

It was not until the fourth or fifth number of *Pickwick* (in the latter Sam Weller made his first appearance) that its importance began to be understood by 'the trade,' and on the eve of the issue of its sixth number, the 22nd August 1836, he had signed an agreement with Mr. Bentley to undertake the editorship of a monthly magazine to be started the following January, to which he was to supply a serial story; and soon afterwards he had agreed with the same publisher to write two other tales, the first at a specified early date; the expressed remuneration in each case being certainly quite inadequate to the claims of a writer of any marked popularity. Under these Bentley agreements he was now writing, month by month, the first half of *Oliver Twist*, and, under his Chapman and Hall agreement, the last half of *Pickwick*, not even by a week in advance of the printer with either; when a circumstance became known to him of which he thus wrote to me.

Agreement for a monthly magazine.

Another for two novels.

C. D. to J. F.

'I heard half-an-hour ago, on authority which leaves me 'in no doubt about the matter (from the binder of *Pickwick* 'in fact), that Macrone intends publishing a new issue of 'my *Sketches* in monthly parts of nearly the same size 'and in just the same form as the *Pickwick Papers*. I 'need not tell you that this is calculated to injure me most 'seriously, or that I have a very natural and most decided

'objection to being supposed to presume upon the success 'of the *Pickwick*, and thus foist this old work upon the 'public in its new dress for the mere purpose of putting 'money in my own pocket. Neither need I say that the 'fact of my name being before the town, attached to three 'publications at the same time, must prove seriously 'prejudicial to my reputation. As you are acquainted 'with the circumstances under which these copyrights 'were disposed of, and as I know I may rely on your kind 'help, may I beg you to see Macrone, and to state in the 'strongest and most emphatic manner my feeling on this 'point. I wish him to be reminded of the sums he paid 'for those books; of the sale he has had for them; of the 'extent to which he has already pushed them; and of the 'very great profits he must necessarily have acquired from 'them. I wish him also to be reminded that no intention 'of publishing them in this form was in the remotest 'manner hinted to me, by him or on his behalf, when he 'obtained possession of the copyright. I then wish you 'to put it to his feelings of common honesty and fair-'dealing whether after this communication he will per-'severe in his intention.' What else the letter contained need not be quoted, but it strongly moved me to do my best.

LONDON: 1837.

C. D. to J. F.

A scheme to re-issue *Sketches*.

I found Mr. Macrone inaccessible to all arguments of persuasion however. That he had bought the book for a small sum at a time when the smallest was not unimportant to the writer, shortly before his marriage, and that he had since made very considerable profits by it, in no way disturbed his position that he had a right to make as

Attempt to prevent this.

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LONDON: 1837.

much as he could of what was his, without regard to how it had become so. There was nothing for it but to change front, and, admitting it might be a less evil to the unlucky author to repurchase than to let the monthly issue proceed, to ask what further gain was looked for: but so wide a mouth was opened at this that I would have no part in the costly process of filling it. I told Dickens so, and strongly counselled him to keep quiet for a time.

But the worry and vexation were too great with all the work he had in hand, and I was hardly surprised next day to receive the letter sent me; which yet should be prefaced with the remark that suspense of any kind was at all times intolerable to the writer. The interval between the accomplishment of anything, and 'its first motion,' Dickens never could endure, and he was too ready to make any sacrifice to abridge or end it. This did not belong to the strong side of his character, and advantage was frequently taken of the fact. 'I sent down just now to know whether you were at 'home (two o'clock), as Chapman and Hall were with me, 'and, the case being urgent, I wished to have the further 'benefit of your kind advice and assistance. Macrone and 'H—— (arcades ambo) waited on them this morning, and 'after a long discussion, peremptorily refused to take one 'farthing less than the two thousand pounds. H—— re-'peated the statement of figures which he made to you yes-'terday, and put it to Hall whether he could say from his 'knowledge of such matters that the estimate of probable 'profit was exorbitant. Hall, whose judgment may be relied 'on in such matters, could not dispute the justice of the 'calculation. And so the matter stood. In this dilemma

C. D. to J. F.

£2000 asked for what £150 had purchased.

'it occurred to them (my *Pickwick* men), whether, if the 'Sketches *must* appear in monthly numbers, it would not 'be better for them to appear for their benefit and mine 'conjointly, than for Macrone's sole use and behoof; 'whether they, having all the *Pickwick* machinery in full 'operation, could not obtain for them a much larger sale 'than Macrone could ever get; and whether, even at this 'large price of two thousand pounds, we might not, besides 'retaining the copyright, reasonably hope for a good profit 'on the outlay. These suggestions having presented 'themselves, they came straight to me (having obtained a 'few hours' respite) and proposed that we should purchase 'the copyrights between us for the two thousand pounds, 'and publish them in monthly parts. I need not say that 'no other form of publication would repay the expenditure; 'and they wish me to explain by an address that *they*, 'who may be fairly put forward as the parties, have been 'driven into that mode of publication, or the copyrights 'would have been lost. I considered the matter in every 'possible way. I sent for you, but you were out. I 'thought of'. . what need not be repeated, now that all is past and gone . . 'and consented. Was I right? I think 'you will say yes.' I could not say no, though I was glad to have been no party to a price so exorbitant; which yet profited extremely little the person who received it. He died in hardly more than two years; and if Dickens had enjoyed the most liberal treatment at his hands, he could not have exerted himself more generously for the widow and children.

LONDON: 1837. C. D. to J. F.

Chapman & Hall advise purchase.

Close of dealings with Mr. Macrone.

His new story was now beginning largely to share atten- *Oliver Twist.*

LONDON: 1837.

tion with his *Pickwick Papers*, and it was delightful to see how real all its people became to him. What I had most indeed to notice in him, at the very outset of his career, was his indifference to any praise of his performances on the merely literary side, compared with the higher recognition of them as bits of actual life, with the meaning and purpose on their part, and the responsibility on his, of realities rather than creatures of fancy. The exception that might be drawn from *Pickwick* is rather in seeming than substance. A first book has its immunities, and the distinction of this from the rest of the writings appears in what has been said of its origin. The plan of it was simply to amuse. It was to string together whimsical sketches of the pencil by entertaining sketches of the pen; and, at its beginning, where or how it was to end was as little known to himself as to any of its readers. But genius is a master as well as a servant, and when the laughter and fun were at their highest something graver made its appearance. He had to defend himself for this; and he said that though the mere oddity of a new acquaintance was apt to impress one at first, the more serious qualities were discovered when we became friends with the man. In other words he might have said that the change was become necessary for his own satisfaction. The book itself, in teaching him what his power was, had made him more conscious of what would be expected from its use; and this never afterwards quitted him. In what he was to do hereafter, as in all he was doing now, with *Pickwick* still to finish and *Oliver* only beginning, it constantly attended him. Nor could it well be otherwise,

Characters real to himself.

Distinction of *Pickwick* from other works.

Sense of responsibility for his writ-

with all those fanciful creations so real, to a nature in itself so practical and earnest; and in this spirit I had well understood the letter accompanying what had been published of *Oliver* since its commencement the preceding February, which reached me the day after I visited him. Something to the effect of what has just been said, I had remarked publicly of the portion of the story sent to me; and his instant warm-hearted acknowledgment, of which I permit myself to quote a line or two, showed me in what perfect agreement we were. 'How 'can I thank you? Can I do better than by saying that 'the sense of poor Oliver's reality, which I know you have 'had from the first, has been the highest of all praise to 'me. None that has been lavished upon me have I felt 'half so much as that appreciation of my intent and 'meaning. You know I have ever done so, for it was 'your feeling for me and mine for you that first brought 'us together, and I hope will keep us so, till death do us 'part. Your notices make me grateful but very proud; 'so have a care of them.'

LONDON: 1837.

C. D. to J. F.

There was nothing written by him after this date which I did not see before the world did, either in manuscript or proofs; and in connection with the latter I shortly began to give him the help which he publicly mentioned twenty years later in dedicating his collected writings to me. One of his letters reminds me when these corrections began, and they were continued very nearly to the last. They lightened for him a labour of which he had more than enough imposed upon him at this time by others, and they were never anything but an enjoyment to me. 'I have,' he wrote, 'so

Help given with his proofs.

LONDON: 1837.

C. D. to J. F.

'many sheets of the *Miscellany* to correct before I can 'begin *Oliver*, that I fear I shall not be able to leave 'home this morning. I therefore send your revise of the '*Pickwick* by Fred, who is on his way with it to the 'printers. You will see that my alterations are very slight, 'but I think for the better.' This was the fourteenth number of the *Pickwick Papers*. Fred was his next younger brother, who lived with him at the time.

Pickwick No. XIV.

The number following this was the famous one in which the hero finds himself in the Fleet, and another of his letters will show what enjoyment the writing of it had given to himself. I had sent to ask him where we were to meet for a proposed ride that day. 'HERE,' was his reply. 'I am slippered and jacketted, and, like that same 'starling who is so very seldom quoted, can't get out. I 'am getting on, thank Heaven, like "a house o' fire," 'and think the next *Pickwick* will bang all the others. I 'shall expect you at one, and we will walk to the stable 'together. If you know anybody at Saint Paul's, I wish 'you'd send round and ask them not to ring the bell so. 'I can hardly hear my own ideas as they come into my 'head, and say what they mean.'

C. D. to J. F.

Writing No. XV.

The exulting tone of confidence in what he had thus been writing was indeed well justified. He had as yet done nothing so remarkable, in blending humour with tragedy, as his picture of what the poor side of a debtors' prison was in the days of which we have seen that he had himself had bitter experience; and we have but to recall, as it rises sharply to the memory, what is contained in this portion of a work that was not only among his earliest but

The debtors' prison in *Pickwick*.

his least considered as to plan, to understand what it was that not alone had given him his fame so early, but that in itself held the germ of the future that awaited him. Every point was a telling one, and the truthfulness of the whole unerring. The dreadful restlessness of the place, undefined yet unceasing, unsatisfying and terrible, was pictured throughout with De Foe's minute reality; while points of character were handled in that greater style which connects with the richest oddities of humour an insight into principles of character universal as nature itself. When he resolved that Sam Weller should be occupant of the prison with Mr. Pickwick, he was perhaps thinking of his favourite Smollett, and how, when Peregrine Pickle was inmate of the Fleet, Hatchway and Pipes refused to leave him; but Fielding himself might have envied his way of setting about it. Nor is any portion of his picture less admirable than this. The comedy gradually deepening into tragedy; the shabby vagabonds who are the growth of debtors' prisons, contrasting with the poor simple creatures who are their sacrifices and victims; Mr. Mivins and Mr. Smangle side by side with the cobbler ruined by his legacy, who sleeps under the table to remind himself of his old four-poster; Mr. Pickwick's first night in the marshal's room, Sam Weller entertaining Stiggins in the snuggery, Jingle in decline, and the chancery prisoner dying; in all these scenes there was writing of the first order, a deep feeling of character, that delicate form of humour which has a quaintly pathetic turn in it as well, comedy of the richest and broadest kind, and the easy handling throughout of a

London: 1837.

A recollection of Smollett.

Gaol scenes.

LONDON: 1837.

master in his art. We place the picture by the side of those of the great writers of this style of fiction in our language, and it does not fall by the comparison.

Reception of *Pickwick*.

Of what the reception of the book had been up to this time, and of the popularity Dickens had won as its author, this also will be the proper place to speak. For its kind, its extent, and the absence of everything unreal or factitious in the causes that contributed to it, it is unexampled in literature. Here was a series of sketches, without the pretence to such interest as attends a well-constructed story; put forth in a form apparently ephemeral as its purpose; having none that seemed higher than to exhibit some studies of cockney manners with help from a comic artist; and after four or five parts had appeared, without newspaper notice or puffing, and itself not subserving in the public anything false or unworthy, it sprang into a popularity that each part carried higher and higher, until people at this time talked of nothing else, tradesmen recommended their goods by using its name, and its sale, outstripping at a bound that of all the most famous books of the century, had reached to an almost fabulous number. Of part one, the binder prepared four hundred; and of part fifteen, his order was for more than forty thousand. Every class, the high equally with the low, were attracted to it. The charm of its gaiety and good humour, its inexhaustible fun, its riotous overflow of animal spirits, its brightness and keenness of observation, and above all, the incomparable ease of its many varieties of enjoyment, fascinated everybody. Judges on the bench and boys in the street, gravity and folly, the young and the old, those who

A popular rage.

were entering life and those who were quitting it, alike found it to be irresistible. 'An archdeacon,' wrote Mr. Carlyle afterwards to me, 'with his own venerable lips, re- 'peated to me, the other night, a strange profane story: of 'a solemn clergyman who had been administering ghostly 'consolation to a sick person; having finished, satisfactorily 'as he thought, and got out of the room, he heard the 'sick person ejaculate: "Well, thank God, *Pickwick* will '"be out in ten days any way!"—This is dreadful.' LONDON: 1837. Mr. Carlyle's 'dreadful' story.

Let me add that there was something more in it all than the gratification of mere fun and laughter, more even than the rarer pleasure that underlies the outbreak of all forms of genuine humour. Another chord had been struck. Over and above the lively painting of manners which at first had been so attractive, there was something that left deeper mark. Genial and irrepressible enjoyment, affectionate heartiness of tone, unrestrained exuberance of mirth, these are not more delightful than they are fleeting and perishable qualities; but the attention eagerly excited by the charm of them in *Pickwick*, found itself retained by something more permanent. We had all become suddenly conscious, in the very thick of the extravaganza of adventure and fun set before us, that here were real people. It was not somebody talking humorously about them, but they were there themselves. That a number of persons belonging to the middle and lower ranks of life (Wardles, Winkles, Wellers, Tupmans, Bardells, Snubbinses, Perkers, Bob Sawyers, Dodsons and Foggs,) had been somehow added to his intimate and familiar acquaintance, the ordinary reader knew before One secret of the success. Reality of characters.

LONDON: 1837.

half a dozen numbers were out; and it took not many more to make clear to the intelligent reader, that a new and original genius in the walk of Smollett and Fielding had arisen in England.

Pickwick inferior to later books.

I do not, for reasons to be hereafter stated, think the *Pickwick Papers* comparable to the later books; but, apart from the new vein of humour it opened, its wonderful freshness and its unflagging animal spirits, it has two characters that will probably continue to attract to it an unfading popularity. Its pre-eminent achievement is of course Sam Weller; one of those people that take their place among the supreme successes of fiction, as one that nobody ever saw but everybody recognizes, at once perfectly natural and intensely original. Who is there that has ever thought him tedious? Who is so familiar with him as not still to be finding something new in him? Who is so amazed by his inexhaustible resources, or so amused by his inextinguishable laughter, as to doubt of his being as ordinary and perfect a reality, nevertheless, as anything in the London streets? When indeed the relish has been dulled that makes such humour natural and appreciable, and not his native fun only, his ready and rich illustration, his imperturbable self-possession, but his devotion to his master, his chivalry and his gallantry, are no longer discovered, or believed no longer to exist, in the ranks of life to which he belongs, it will be worse for all of us than for the fame of his creator.

Exception for Sam Weller:

and for Mr. Pickwick.

Nor, when faith is lost in that possible combination of eccentricities and benevolences, shrewdness and simplicity, good sense and folly, all that suggests the ludicrous and

nothing that suggests contempt for it, which form the delightful oddity of Pickwick, will the mistake committed be one merely of critical misjudgment. But of this there is small fear. Sam Weller and Mr Pickwick are the Sancho and the Quixote of Londoners, and as little likely to pass away as the old city itself. LONDON: 1837.

Dickens was very fond of riding in these early years, and there was no recreation he so much indulged, or with such profit to himself, in the intervals of his hardest work. I was his companion oftener than I could well afford the time for, the distances being great and nothing else to be done for the day; but when a note would unexpectedly arrive while I knew him to be hunted hard by one of his printers, telling me he had been sticking to work so closely that he must have rest, and, by way of getting it, proposing we should start together that morning at eleven o'clock for 'a fifteen mile ride out, ditto in, and a lunch on the 'road' with a wind-up of six o'clock dinner in Doughty-street, I could not resist the good fellowship. His notion of finding rest from mental exertion in as much bodily exertion of equal severity, continued with him to the last; taking in the later years what I always thought the too great strain of as many miles in walking as he now took in the saddle, and too often indulging it at night: for, though he was always passionately fond of walking, he observed as yet a moderation in it, even accepting as sufficient my seven or eight miles companionship. 'What a brilliant morning for a country walk!' he would write, with not another word in his dispatch. Or, 'Is it 'possible that you can't, oughtn't, shouldn't, mustn't, Personal habits. Walking.

LONDON: 1837.

C. D. to J. F.

'*won't* be tempted, this gorgeous day!' Or, 'I start pre-'cisely—precisely mind—at half-past one. Come, come, '*come*, and walk in the green lanes. You will work the 'better for it all the week. COME! I shall expect you.' Or, 'You don't feel disposed, do you, to muffle yourself 'up, and start off with me for a good brisk walk over 'Hampstead-heath? I knows a good 'ous there where we 'can have a red-hot chop for dinner, and a glass of good

Jack Straw's.

'wine': which led to our first experience of Jack Straw's-castle, memorable for many happy meetings in coming years. But the rides were most popular and frequent. 'I think,' he would write, 'Richmond and Twickenham, 'thro' the park, out at Knightsbridge, and over Barnes-'common—would make a beautiful ride.' Or, 'Do you 'know, I shouldn't object to an early chop at some village

Relief after writing.

'inn?' Or, 'Not knowing whether my head was off or 'on, it became so addled with work, I have gone riding 'the old road, and should be truly delighted to meet or 'be overtaken by you.' Or, 'Where shall it be—*oh where* '—Hampstead, Greenwich, Windsor? WHERE? ? ? ? ? ? 'while the day is bright, not when it has dwindled away 'to nothing! For who can be of any use whatsomdever 'such a day as this, excepting out of doors?' Or it might be interrogatory summons to 'A hard trot of three 'hours?' or intimation as laconic 'To be heard of at Eel-'pie-house, Twickenham!' When first I knew him, I may add, his carriage for his wife's use was a small

His ponies.

chaise with a smaller pair of ponies, which, having a habit of making sudden rushes up bye-streets in the day and peremptory standstills in ditches by night,

were changed in the following year for a more suitable equipage. LONDON: 1837.

To this mention of his habits while at work when our friendship began, I have to add what will complete the relation already given, in connection with his *Sketches*, of the uneasy sense accompanying his labour that it was yielding insufficient for himself while it enriched others, which is a needful part of his story at this time. At midsummer 1837, replying to some inquiries, and sending his agreement with Mr. Bentley for the *Miscellany* under which he was writing *Oliver*, he went on: 'It 'is a very extraordinary fact (I forgot it on Sunday) that 'I have NEVER HAD from him a copy of the agreement 'respecting the novel, which I never saw before or since 'I signed it at his house one morning long ago. Shall I 'ask him for a copy or no? I have looked at some 'memoranda I made at the time, and I *fear* he has my 'second novel on the same terms, under the same agree-'ment. This is a bad look-out, but we must try and 'mend it. You will tell me you are very much surprised 'at my doing business in this way. So am I, for in most 'matters of labour and application I am punctuality 'itself. The truth is (though you do not need I should 'explain the matter to you, my dear fellow) that if I 'had allowed myself to be worried by these things, I 'could never have done as much as I have. But I 'much fear, in my desire to avoid present vexations, 'I have laid up a bitter store for the future.' The second novel, which he had promised in a complete form for a very early date, and had already selected subject

Natural discontents.

C. D. to J. F.

The early agreements.

LONDON: 1837.

Proposed successor to *Oliver Twist*.

and title for, was published four years later as *Barnaby Rudge;* but of the third he at present knew nothing but that he was expected to begin it, if not in the magazine, somewhere or other independently within a specified time.

The first appeal made, in taking action upon his letter, had reference to the immediate pressure of the *Barnaby* novel; but it also opened up the question of the great change of circumstances since these various agreements had been precipitately signed by him, the very different situation brought about by the extraordinary increase in the popularity of his writings, and the advantage it would be, to both Mr. Bentley and himself, to make more equitable adjustment of their relations. Some misunderstandings followed, but were closed by a compromise in September 1837; by which the third novel was abandoned* on certain conditions, and *Barnaby* was undertaken to be finished by November 1838. This involved a completion of the new story during the progress of *Oliver*, whatever might be required to follow on the close of *Pickwick;* and I doubted its wisdom. But it was accepted for the time.

Relations with Mr. Bentley.

A compromise.

Trip to Flanders.

He had meanwhile taken his wife abroad for a ten days' summer holiday, accompanied by the shrewd observant young artist, Mr. Hablot Browne, whose admirable illustrations to *Pickwick* had more than supplied Mr. Seymour's loss; and I had a letter from him on their landing at Calais on the 2nd of July.

'We have arranged for a post-coach to take us to

* I have a memorandum in Dickens's writing that 500*l.* was to have been given for it, and an additional 250*l.* on its sale reaching 3000 copies: but I feel certain it was surrendered on more favourable terms.

'Ghent, Brussels, Antwerp, and a hundred other places, 'that I cannot recollect now and couldn't spell if I did. 'We went this afternoon in a barouche to some gardens 'where the people dance, and where they were footing it 'most heartily—especially the women, who in their short 'petticoats and light caps look uncommonly agreeable. 'A gentleman in a blue surtout and silken berlins accom- 'panied us from the hotel, and acted as curator. He even 'waltzed with a very smart lady (just to show us, con- 'descendingly, how it ought to be done), and waltzed 'elegantly too. We rang for slippers after we came back, 'and it turned out that this gentleman was the Boots.'

CALAIS: 1837.

C. D. to J. F.

His later sea-side holiday was passed at Broadstairs, as were those of many subsequent years, and the little watering-place has been made memorable by his pleasant sketch of it. From his letters to myself a few lines may be given of his first doings and impressions there.

First visit to Broadstairs.

Writing on the 3rd of September he reports himself just risen from an attack of illness. 'I am much better, 'and hope to begin *Pickwick No.* 18 to-morrow. You 'will imagine how queer I must have been when I tell 'you that I have been compelled for four-and-twenty 'mortal hours to abstain from porter or other malt 'liquor! ! ! I done it though—really... I have dis- 'covered that the landlord of the Albion has delicious 'hollands (but what is that to *you*, for you cannot sym- 'pathise with my feelings), and that a cobbler who lives 'opposite to my bed-room window is a roman-catholic, 'and gives an hour and a half to his devotions every 'morning behind his counter. I have walked upon the

Writing *Pickwick*, No. XVIII.

C. D. to J. F.

BROADSTAIRS: 1837.

C. D. to J. F.

'sands at low-water from this place to Ramsgate, and sat 'upon the same at high-ditto till I have been flayed with 'the cold. I have seen ladies and gentlemen walking 'upon the earth in slippers of buff, and pickling them-'selves in the sea in complete suits of the same. I have 'seen stout gentlemen looking at nothing through power-'ful telescopes for hours, and, when at last they saw a 'cloud of smoke, fancying a steamer behind it, and going 'home comfortable and happy. I have found out that 'our next neighbour has a wife and something else under 'the same roof with the rest of his furniture—the wife 'deaf and blind, and the something else given to drink-'ing. And if you ever get to the end of this letter *you* 'will find out that I subscribe myself on paper as on 'everything else (some atonement perhaps for its length 'and absurdity),' &c. &c.

Piracies of *Pickwick*.

In his next letter (from 12, High-street, Broadstairs, on the 7th) there is allusion to one of the many piracies of *Pickwick*, which had distinguished itself beyond the rest by a preface abusive of the writer plundered. 'I recollect 'this "member of the dramatic-authors'-society" bring-'ing an action once against Chapman who rented the 'City-theatre, in which it was proved that he had under-'taken to write under special agreement seven melo-'dramas for five pounds, to enable him to do which a 'room had been hired in a gin-shop close by. The defen-'dant's plea was, that the plaintiff was always drunk, and 'had not fulfilled his contract. Well; if the *Pickwick* 'has been the means of putting a few shillings in the 'vermin-eaten pockets of so miserable a creature, and has

C. D. to J. F.

'saved him from a workhouse or a jail, let him empty out 'his little pot of filth and welcome. I am quite content 'to have been the means of relieving him. Besides, he 'seems to have suffered by agreements!' BROADSTAIRS: 1837. A sufferer from agreements.

His own troubles in that way were compromised for the time, as already hinted, at the close of this September month; and at the end of the month following, after finishing *Pickwick* and resuming *Oliver*, the latter having been suspended by him during the recent disputes, he made his first visit to Brighton. The opening of his letter of Friday the 3rd of November is full of regrets that I had been unable to join them there. 'It is a beautiful day and we have been taking advantage of it, but 'the wind until to-day has been so high and the weather 'so stormy that Kate has been scarcely able to peep out 'of doors. On Wednesday it blew a perfect hurricane, 'breaking windows, knocking down shutters, carrying 'people off their legs, blowing the fires out, and causing 'universal consternation. The air was for some hours 'darkened with a shower of black hats (second-hand) 'which are supposed to have been blown off the heads of 'unwary passengers in remote parts of the town, and have 'been industriously picked up by the fishermen. Charles 'Kean was advertised for *Othello* "for the benefit of Mrs. '"Sefton, having most kindly postponed for this one day '"his departure for London." I have not heard whether 'he got to the theatre, but I am sure nobody else did. 'They do *The Honeymoon* to-night, on which occasion 'I mean to patronize the drayma. We have a beautiful 'bay-windowed sitting-room here, fronting the sea, but

First visit to Brighton.

C. D. to J. F.

A storm.

The theatre.

BRIGHTON: 1837. C. D. to J. F.

'I have seen nothing of B's brother who was to have 'shown me the lions, and my notions of the place are 'consequently somewhat confined: being limited to the 'pavilion, the chain-pier, and the sea. The last is quite 'enough for me, and, unless I am joined by some male 'companion (*do you think I shall be?*), is most probably 'all I shall make acquaintance with. I am glad you like '*Oliver* this month: especially glad that you particularize

Characters in *Oliver Twist*.

'the first chapter. I hope to do great things with Nancy. 'If I can only work out the idea I have formed of her, and 'of the female who is to contrast with her, I think I may 'defy Mr. —— and all his works.* I have had great 'difficulty in keeping my hands off Fagin and the rest of 'them in the evenings; but as I came down for rest, I 'have resisted the temptation, and steadily applied myself 'to the labour of being idle. Did you ever read (of

Reading De Foe.

'course you have though) Defoe's *History of the Devil?* 'What a capital thing it is! I bought it for a couple 'of shillings yesterday morning, and have been quite 'absorbed in it ever since. We must have been jolter-'headed geniuses not to have anticipated M's reply. 'My best remembrances to him. I see H at this moment. 'I must be present at a rehearsal of that opera. It 'will be better than any comedy that was ever played.

* The allusion was to the supposed author of a paper in the *Quarterly Review* (Oct. 1837), in the course of which there was much high praise, but where the writer said at the close: 'Indications are not wanting that the 'particular vein of humour which has hitherto yielded so much attractive 'metal, is worked out. . . . The fact is, Mr. Dickens writes too often and 'too fast. . . . If he persists much longer in this course, it requires no gift 'of prophecy to foretell his fate—he has risen like a rocket, and he will come 'down like the stick.'

'Talking of comedies, I still see NO THOROUGHFARE 'staring me in the face, every time I look down that road. 'I have taken places for Tuesday next. We shall be at home 'at six o'clock, and I shall hope at least to see you that 'evening. I am afraid you will find this letter extremely 'dear at eightpence, but if the warmest assurances of 'friendship and attachment, and anxious lookings-forward 'to the pleasure of your society, be worth anything, throw 'them into the balance, together with a hundred good wishes 'and one hearty assurance that I am,' &c. &c. 'CHARLES 'DICKENS. No room for the flourish—I'll finish it the next 'time I write to you.'

BRIGHTON: 1837. C. D. to J. F. 'No Thoroughfare.'

The flourish that accompanied his signature is familiar to every one. The allusion to the comedy expresses a fancy he at this time had of being able to contribute some such achievement in aid of Macready's gallant efforts at Covent-garden to bring back to the stage its higher associations of good literature and intellectual enjoyment. It connects curiously now that unrealised hope with the exact title of the only story he ever helped himself to dramatize, and which Mr. Fechter played at the Adelphi three years before his death.

Proposed help to Macready's management.

CHAPTER VII.

BETWEEN PICKWICK AND NICKLEBY.

1837 AND 1838.

LONDON: 1837.

NOT remotely bearing on the stage, nevertheless, was the employment on which I found him busy at his return from Brighton; one result of his more satisfactory relations with Mr. Bentley having led to a promise to edit for him a life of the celebrated clown, Grimaldi. The manuscript had been prepared from autobiographical notes by a Mr. Egerton Wilks, and contained one or two stories told so badly, and so well worth better telling, that the hope of enlivening their dulness at the cost of very little labour constituted a sort of attraction for him. Except the preface he did not write a line of this biography, such modifications or additions as he made having been dictated by him to his father; whom I found often in the supreme enjoyment of the office of amanuensis. He had also a most indifferent opinion of the mass of material which in general composed it, describing it to me as 'twaddle'; and his own modest estimate of the book, on its completion, may be guessed from the number of notes of admiration (no less than thirty) which accompanied his written mention to me of the sale with which it started in the

Edits the *Life of Grimaldi.*

His own opinion of it.

first week of its publication. 'Seventeen hundred *Gri-* LONDON: 1837.
'*maldis* have been already sold, and the demand increases
'daily!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!'

It was not to have all its own way however. A great many critical faults were found; and one point in particular was urged against his handling such a subject, that he could never himself even have seen Grimaldi. To this last objection he was moved to reply, and had prepared a letter for the *Miscellany*, 'from editor to sub-editor,' which it was thought best to suppress, but of which the opening remark may now be not unamusing. 'I under- Answered by himself.
'stand that a gentleman unknown is going about this town
'privately informing all ladies and gentlemen of discon-
'tented natures, that, on a comparison of dates and putting
'together of many little circumstances which occur to his
'great sagacity, he has made the profound discovery that
'I can never have seen Grimaldi whose life I have edited,
'and that the book must therefore of necessity be bad.
'Now, sir, although I was brought up from remote country
'parts in the dark ages of 1819 and 1820 to behold the
'splendour of Christmas pantomimes and the humour of
'Joe, in whose honour I am informed I clapped my hands
'with great precocity, and although I even saw him act C. D. *loq.*
'in the remote times of 1823; yet as I had not then
'aspired to the dignity of a tail-coat, though forced by a
'relentless parent into my first pair of boots, I am will-
'ing, with the view of saving this honest gentleman
'further time and trouble, to concede that I had not
'arrived at man's estate when Grimaldi left the stage, and
'that my recollections of his acting are, to my loss, but

An objection to his writing about Grimaldi.

LONDON: 1837.

C. D. *loq.*

'shadowy and imperfect. Which confession I now make 'publickly, and without mental qualification or reserve,' 'to all whom it may concern. But the deduction of this 'pleasant gentleman that therefore the Grimaldi book 'must be bad, I must take leave to doubt. I don't think 'that to edit a man's biography from his own notes it is 'essential you should have known him, and I don't 'believe that Lord Braybrooke had more than the very 'slightest acquaintance with Mr. Pepys whose memoirs he 'edited two centuries after he died.'

Completion of *Pickwick.*

Enormous meanwhile, and without objection audible on any side, had been the success of the completed *Pickwick*, which we celebrated by a dinner, with himself in the chair and Talfourd in the vice-chair, everybody in hearty good humour with every other body; and a copy of which I received from him on the 11th of December in the most luxurious of Hayday's bindings, with a note worth preserving for its closing allusion. The passage referred to in it was a comment, in delicately-chosen words, that Leigh Hunt had made on the inscription at the grave in Kensal-green.*

C. D. to J. F.

'Chapman and Hall have just sent me, with a 'copy of our deed, three "extra-super" bound copies of '*Pickwick*, as per specimen inclosed. The first I forward 'to you, the second I have presented to our good friend 'Ainsworth, and the third Kate has retained for herself. 'Accept your copy with one sincere and most comprehen-'sive expression of my warmest friendship and esteem; and 'a hearty renewal, if there need be any renewal when there 'has been no interruption, of all those assurances of affec-

* See *ante*, p. 98.

'tionate regard which our close friendship and communion 'for a long time back has every day implied . . . That 'beautiful passage you were so kind and considerate as to 'send me, has given me the only feeling akin to pleasure' '(sorrowful pleasure it is) that I have yet had, connected 'with the loss of my dear young friend and companion; for 'whom my love and attachment will never diminish, and 'by whose side, if it please God to leave me in possession 'of sense to signify my wishes, my bones, whenever or 'wherever I die, will one day be laid. Tell Leigh Hunt 'when you have an opportunity how much he has affected 'me, and how deeply I thank him for what he has done. 'You cannot say it too strongly.'

LONDON: 1837. C. D. to J. F.

A purpose long entertained.

The 'deed' mentioned was one executed in the previous month to restore to him a third ownership in the book which had thus far enriched all concerned but himself. The original understanding respecting it Mr. Edward Chapman thus describes for me. 'There was no agree-'ment about *Pickwick* except a verbal one. Each number 'was to consist of a sheet and a half, for which we were 'to pay fifteen guineas; and we paid him for the first two 'numbers at once, as he required the money to go and get 'married with. We were also to pay more according to 'the sale, and I think *Pickwick* altogether cost us three 'thousand pounds.' Adjustment to the sale would have cost four times as much, and of the actual payments I have myself no note; but, as far as my memory serves, they are overstated by Mr. Chapman. My impression is, that, above and beyond the first sum due for each of the twenty numbers (making no allowance for their

Relations with Chapman and Hall.

LONDON: 1837.

extension after the first to thirty-two pages), successive cheques were given, as the work went steadily on to the enormous sale it reached, which brought up the entire sum received to two thousand five hundred pounds. I had however always pressed so strongly the importance to him of some share in the copyright, that this at last was conceded in the deed above-mentioned, though five years were to elapse before the right should accrue; and it was only yielded as part consideration for a further agreement entered into at the same date (the 19th of November, 1837) whereby Dickens engaged to 'write a new work the title whereof 'shall be determined by him, of a similar character and 'of the same extent as the *Posthumous Papers of the 'Pickwick Club,*' the first number of which was to be delivered on the fifteenth of the following March, and each of the numbers on the same day of each of the successive nineteen months; which was also to be the date of the payment to him, by Messrs. Chapman and Hall, of twenty several sums of one hundred and fifty pounds each for five years' use of the copyright, the entire ownership in which was then to revert to Dickens. The name of this new book, as all the world knows, was *The Life and Adventures of Nicholas Nickleby;* and between April 1838 and October 1839 it was begun and finished accordingly.

Payments for *Pickwick.*

Agreement for *Nicholas Nickleby.*

Going on with *Oliver Twist.*

All through the interval of these arrangements *Oliver Twist* had been steadily continued. Month by month, for many months, it had run its opening course with the close of *Pickwick,* as we shall see it close with the opening of *Nickleby;* and the expectations of those who had built most confidently on the young novelist were more than

confirmed. Here was the interest of a story simply but well constructed; and characters with the same impress of reality upon them, but more carefully and skilfully drawn. Nothing could be meaner than the subject, the progress of a parish or workhouse boy, nothing less so than its treatment. As each number appeared, his readers generally became more and more conscious of what already, as we have seen, had revealed itself amid even the riotous fun of *Pickwick*, that the purpose was not solely to amuse; and, far more decisively than its predecessor, the new story further showed what were the not least potent elements in the still increasing popularity that was gathering around the writer. His qualities could be appreciated as well as felt in an almost equal degree by all classes of his various readers. Thousands were attracted to him because he placed them in the midst of scenes and characters with which they were already themselves acquainted; and thousands were reading him with no less avidity because he introduced them to passages of nature and life of which they before knew nothing, but of the truth of which their own habits and senses sufficed to assure them. Only to genius are so revealed the affinities and sympathies of high and low, in regard to the customs and usages of life; and only a writer of the first rank can bear the application of such a test. For it is by the alliance of common habits, quite as much as by the bonds of a common humanity, that we are all of us linked together; and the result of being above the necessity of depending on other people's opinions, and that of being below it, are pretty much the same. It would equally startle both high and

LONDON: 1837.

The story characterized.

Reasons for popularity with every class.

Affinities of High and Low.

LONDON: 1838.

low to be conscious of the whole that is implied in this close approximation; but for the common enjoyment of which I speak such consciousness is not required; and for the present Fagin may be left undisturbed in his school of practical ethics with only the Dodger, Charley Bates, and his other promising scholars.

'Surgit amari aliquid.'

With such work as this in hand, it will hardly seem surprising that as the time for beginning *Nickleby* came on, and as he thought of his promise for November, he should have the sense of 'something hanging over him like a 'hideous nightmare.' He felt that he could not complete the *Barnaby Rudge* novel by the November of that year as promised, and that the engagement he would have to break was unfitting him for engagements he might otherwise fulfil. He had undertaken what in truth was impossible. The labour of at once editing the *Miscellany* and supplying it with monthly portions of *Oliver*, more than occupied all the time left him by other labours absolutely necessary. 'I no sooner get myself up,' he wrote, 'high 'and dry, to attack *Oliver* manfully, than up come the 'waves of each month's work, and drive me back again 'into a sea of manuscript.' There was nothing for it but that he should make further appeal to Mr. Bentley. 'I have 'recently,' he wrote to him on the 11th of February 1838, 'been thinking a great deal about *Barnaby Rudge*. *Gri-* '*maldi* has occupied so much of the short interval I had 'between the completion of the *Pickwick* and the com- 'mencement of the new work, that I see it will be wholly 'impossible for me to produce it by the time I had hoped, 'with justice to myself or profit to you. What I wish you

A nightmare of an agreement.

C. D. to J. F.

Appeal to Mr. Bent-

'to consider is this: would it not be far more to your 'interest, as well as within the scope of my ability, if 'Barnaby Rudge began in the *Miscellany* immediately 'on the conclusion of *Oliver Twist*, and were continued 'there for the same time, and then published in three 'volumes? Take these simple facts into consideration. 'If the *Miscellany* is to keep its ground, it *must* have 'some continuous tale from me when *Oliver* stops. If I 'sat down to *Barnaby Rudge*, writing a little of it when 'I could (and with all my other engagements it would 'necessarily be a very long time before I could hope to 'finish it that way), it would be clearly impossible for me 'to begin a new series of papers in the *Miscellany*. The 'conduct of three different stories at the same time, and 'the production of a large portion of each, every month, 'would have been beyond Scott himself. Whereas, having 'Barnaby for the *Miscellany*, we could at once supply the 'gap which the cessation of *Oliver* must create, and you 'would have all the advantage of that prestige in favour 'of the work which is certain to enhance the value of 'Oliver Twist considerably. Just think of this at your 'leisure. I am really anxious to do the best I can for you 'as well as for myself, and in this case the pecuniary 'advantage must be all on your side.' This letter nevertheless, which had also requested an overdue account of the sales of the *Miscellany*, led to differences which were only adjusted after six months' wrangling; and I was party to the understanding then arrived at, by which, among other things, *Barnaby* was placed upon the footing desired, and was to begin when *Oliver* closed.

LONDON: 1838.

Proposes to write *Barnaby* in the *Miscellany*.

Letter to Mr. Bentley.

Result of it.

LONDON: 1838.

Progress of *Oliver Twist.*

Of the progress of his *Oliver*, and his habits of writing at the time, it may perhaps be worth giving some additional glimpses from his letters of 1838. 'I was thinking 'about *Oliver* till dinner time yesterday,' he wrote on the 9th of March,* 'and, just as I had fallen upon him tooth 'and nail, was called away to sit with Kate. I did eight 'slips however, and hope to make them fifteen this morn-'ing.' Three days before, a little daughter had been born to him, who became a little god-daughter to me; on which occasion (having closed his announcement with a post-script of 'I can do nothing this morning. What time 'will you ride? The sooner the better, for a good long 'spell'), we rode out fifteen miles on the great north-road, and, after dining at the Red-lion in Barnet on our way home, distinguished the already memorable day by bring-ing in both hacks dead lame.

Birth of his eldest daughter.

Celebration of the day.

On that day week, Monday the 13th, after describing himself 'sitting patiently at home waiting for *Oliver* '*Twist* who has not yet arrived,' which was his pleasant form of saying that his fancy had fallen into sluggishness that morning, he made addition not less pleasant as to some piece of painful news I had sent him, now for-gotten. 'I have not yet seen the paper, and you throw

* There is an earlier allusion I may quote, from a letter in January, for its mention of a small piece written by him at this time, but not included in his acknowledged writings. 'I am as badly off as you. I have not done the 'Young Gentlemen, nor written the preface to *Grimaldi*, nor thought of 'Oliver Twist, or even supplied a subject for the plate.' The *Young Gentlemen* was a small book of sketches which he wrote anonymously as the companion to a similar half-crown volume of *Young Ladies* (not written by him), for Messrs. Chapman and Hall. He added subsequently a like volume of *Young Couples*, also without his name.

C. D. to J. F.

Young Gentlemen and *Young Couples.*

'me into a fever. The comfort is, that all the strange 'and terrible things come uppermost, and that the good 'and pleasant things are mixed up with every moment of 'our existence so plentifully that we scarcely heed them.' At the close of the month Mrs. Dickens was well enough to accompany him to Richmond, for now the time was come to start *Nickleby;* and, having been away from town when *Pickwick's* first number came out, he made it a superstition to be absent at all future similar times. The magazine-day of that April month, I remember, fell upon a Saturday, and the previous evening had brought me a peremptory summons: 'Meet me at the Shakespeare on 'Saturday night at eight; order your horse at midnight, and 'ride back with me.' Which was done accordingly. The smallest hour was sounding from St. Paul's into the night before we started, and the night was none of the pleasantest; but we carried news that lightened every part of the road, for the sale of *Nickleby* had reached that day the astonishing number of nearly fifty thousand! I left him working with unusual cheerfulness at *Oliver Twist* when I left the Star-and-garter on the next day but one, after celebrating with both friends on the previous evening an anniversary* which concerned us all (their second and my twenty-sixth); and which we kept always in future at the same place, except when they were living out of England, for twenty successive years. It was a part of his love of regularity and order, as well as of his kindliness of nature, to place such friendly meetings as these under rules of habit and continuance.

LONDON: 1838.

C. D. to J. F.

First number of *Nicholas Nickleby.*

Its sale

2nd of April 1838.

* See *ante*, p. 91.

CHAPTER VIII.

OLIVER TWIST.

1838.

LONDON: 1838.

THE whole of his time not occupied by *Nickleby* was now given to *Oliver*, and as the story shaped itself to its close it took extraordinary hold of him. I never knew him work so frequently after dinner, or to such late hours (a practice he afterwards abhorred), as during the final months of this task; which it was now his hope to complete before October, though its close in the magazine would not be due until the following March. 'I worked pretty 'well last night,' he writes, referring to it in May, 'very 'well indeed; but although I did eleven close slips before 'half-past twelve I have four to write to complete the 'chapter; and, as I foolishly left them till this morning, 'have the steam to get up afresh.' A month later he writes: 'I got to the sixteenth slip last night, and shall 'try hard to get to the thirtieth before I go to bed.'* Then, on a 'Tuesday night' at the opening of August, he

Interest in the close of *Oliver Twist*.

C. D. to J. F.

* Here is another of the same month: 'All day I have been at work on '*Oliver*, and hope to finish the chapter by bed time. I wish you'd let me 'know what Sir Francis Burdett has been saying about him at some Birming-'ham meeting. B. has just sent me the *Courier* containing some reference to 'his speech; but the speech I haven't seen.'

wrote: 'Hard at work still. Nancy is no more. I showed 'what I have done to Kate last night, who was in an 'unspeakable "*state:*" from which and my own impres- 'sion I augur well. When I have sent Sikes to the devil, 'I must have yours.' 'No, no,' he wrote, in the following month: 'don't, don't let us ride till to-morrow, not having 'yet disposed of the Jew, who is such an out and outer 'that I don't know what to make of him.' No small difficulty to an inventor, where the creatures of his invention are found to be as real as himself; but this also was mastered; and then there remained but the closing quiet chapter to tell the fortunes of those who had figured in the tale. To this he summoned me in the first week of September, replying to a request of mine that he'd give me a call that day. 'Come and give *me* a call, and let 'us have "a bit o' talk" before we have a bit o' som'at 'else. My missis is going out to dinner, and I ought to 'go, but I have got a bad cold. So do you come, and sit 'here, and read, or work, or do something, while I write 'the LAST chapter of *Oliver*, which will be arter a lamb 'chop.' How well I remember that evening! and our talk of what should be the fate of Charley Bates, on behalf of whom (as indeed for the Dodger too) Talfourd had pleaded as earnestly in mitigation of judgment as ever at the bar for any client he had most respected.

LONDON: 1838.

C. D. to J. F.

Nancy, Sikes, and the Jew.

C. D. to J. F.

The last chapter.

The publication had been announced for October, but the third-volume-illustrations intercepted it a little. This part of the story, as we have seen, had been written in anticipation of the magazine, and the designs for it, having to be executed 'in a lump,' were necessarily done somewhat

Cruikshank illustrations.

LONDON: 1838.

hastily. The matter supplied in advance of the monthly portions in the magazine, formed the bulk of the last volume as published in the book; and for this the plates had to be prepared by Cruikshank also in advance of the magazine, to furnish them in time for the separate publication: Sikes and his dog, Fagin in the cell, and Rose Maylie and Oliver, being the three last. None of these Dickens had seen until he saw them in the book on the eve of its publication; when he so strongly objected to one of them that it had to be cancelled. 'I returned 'suddenly to town yesterday afternoon,' he wrote to the artist at the end of October, 'to look at the latter pages of '*Oliver Twist* before it was delivered to the booksellers, 'when I saw the majority of the plates in the last volume 'for the first time. With reference to the last one—Rose 'Maylie and Oliver—without entering into the question 'of great haste, or any other cause, which may have led 'to its being what it is, I am quite sure there can be 'little difference of opinion between us with respect to 'the result. May I ask you whether you will object to 'designing this plate afresh, and doing so *at once*, in order 'that as few impressions as possible of the present one 'may go forth? I feel confident you know me too well 'to feel hurt by this enquiry, and with equal confidence 'in you I have lost no time in preferring it.' This letter, printed from a copy in Dickens's handwriting fortunately committed to my keeping, entirely disposes of a wonderful story* originally promulgated in America, with

Etchings for last volume.

Letter to Cruikshank.

Requests an etching to be cancelled.

* Reproduced as below, in large type, and without a word of contradiction or even doubt, in a biography of Mr. Dickens put forth by Mr. Hotten.

a minute conscientiousness and particularity of detail that might have raised the reputation of Sir Benjamin Backbite himself. Whether all Sir Benjamin's laurels however should fall to the original teller of the tale, or whether any part of them is the property of the alleged authority from

LONDON: 1838.

Slander exposed.

'Mr. Sheldon (*sic*) McKenzie, in the American *Round Table*, relates this anec-
'dote of *Oliver Twist:* In London I was intimate with the brothers Cruikshank,
'Robert and George, but more particularly with the latter. Having called
'upon him one day at his house (it was then in Myddelton-terrace, Penton-
'ville), I had to wait while he was finishing an etching, for which a printer's
'boy was waiting. To while away the time, I gladly complied with his sug-
'gestion that I should look over a portfolio crowded with etchings, proofs, and
'drawings, which lay upon the sofa. Among these, carelessly tied together
'in a wrap of brown paper, was a series of some twenty-five or thirty drawings,
'very carefully finished, through most of which were carried the well-known
'portraits, of Fagin, Bill Sikes and his dog, Nancy, the Artful Dodger, and
'Master Charles Bates—all well known to the readers of *Oliver Twist.* There
'was no mistake about it; and when Cruikshank turned round, his work
'finished, I said as much. He told me that it had long been in his mind to
'show the life of a London thief by a series of drawings engraved by himself,
'in which, without a single line of letter-press, the story would be strikingly
'and clearly told. "Dickens," he continued, "dropped in here one day, just
'"as you have done, and, while waiting until I could speak with him, took
'"up that identical portfolio, and ferreted out that bundle of drawings.
'"When he came to that one which represents Fagin in the condemned cell,
'"he studied it for half an hour, and told me that he was tempted to change
'"the whole plot of his story; not to carry Oliver Twist through adventures
'"in the country, but to take him up into the thieves' den in London, show
'"what their life was, and bring Oliver through it without sin or shame. I
'"consented to let him write up to as many of the designs as he thought
'"would suit his purpose; and that was the way in which Fagin, Sikes,
'"and Nancy were created. My drawings suggested them, rather than in-
'"dividuality suggesting (*sic*) my drawings."' Since this was in type I have seen the Life of Dickens published in America (Philadelphia: Peterson Brothers) by Dr. Shelton Mackenzie, in which I regret to find this story literally repeated (pp. 164-5). The only differences from it as here quoted are, that 1847 is given as the date of the visit; that besides the 'portraits' named there are said to have been 'many others who were not introduced;' and that the final words run thus: 'My drawings suggested them, rather than his strong in-
'dividuality suggested my drawings.'

A marvellous fable.

Falsehood ascribed to a distinguished artist.

LONDON: 1838.

which he says that he received it, is unfortunately not quite clear. There would hardly have been a doubt, if the fable had been confined to the other side of the Atlantic; but it has been reproduced and widely circulated on this side also; and the distinguished artist whom it calumniates by fathering its invention upon him, either not conscious of it or not caring to defend himself, has been left undefended from the slander. By my ability to produce Dickens's letter I am spared the necessity of characterizing the tale, myself, by the one unpolite word (in three letters) which alone would have been applicable to it.

Reputation of *Oliver Twist*.

The completed *Oliver Twist* found a circle of admirers, not so wide in its range as those of others of his books, but of a character and mark that made their honest liking for it, and steady advocacy of it, important to his fame; and the book has held its ground in the first class of his writings. It deserves that place. The admitted exaggerations in *Pickwick* are incident to its club's extravaganza of adventure, of which they are part, and are easily separable from the reality of its wit and humour, and its incomparable freshness; but no such allowances were needed here. Make what deduction the too scrupulous reader of *Oliver* might please for 'lowness' in the subject, the precision and the unexaggerated force of the delineation were not to be disputed. The art of copying from nature as it really exists in the common walks, had not been carried by any one to greater perfection, or to better results in the way of combination. Such was his handling of the piece of solid, existing, everyday life, which he made here the groundwork of his wit and tenderness,

Copying from nature.

that the book which did much to help out of the world the social evils it pourtrayed, will probably preserve longest the picture of them as they then were. Thus far indeed he had written nothing to which in a greater or less degree this felicity did not belong. At the time of which I am speaking, the debtors' prisons described in *Pickwick*, the parochial management denounced in *Oliver*, and the Yorkshire schools exposed in *Nickleby*, were all actual existences; which now have no vivider existence than in the forms he thus gave to them. With wiser purposes, he superseded the old petrifying process of the magician in the Arabian tale, and struck the prisons and parish abuses of his country, and its schools of neglect and crime, into palpable life for ever. A portion of the truth of the past, of the character and very history of the moral abuses of his time, will thus remain always in his writings; and it will be remembered that with only the light arms of humour and laughter, and the gentle ones of pathos and sadness, he carried cleansing and reform into those Augean stables.

LONDON: 1838.

Social evils passed away.

Augean stables cleansed.

Not that such intentions are in any degree ever intruded by this least didactic of writers. It is the fact that teaches, and not any sermonizing drawn from it. *Oliver Twist* is the history of a child born in a workhouse and brought up by parish overseers, and there is nothing introduced that is out of keeping with the design. It is a series of pictures from the tragi-comedy of lower life worked out by perfectly natural agencies, from the dying mother and the starved wretches of the first volume, through the scenes and gradations of crime, careless or

LONDON: 1838.

deliberate, which have a frightful consummation in the last volume, but are never without the reliefs and self-assertions of humanity even in scenes and among characters so debased. It is indeed the primary purpose of the tale to show its little hero, jostled as he is in the miserable crowd, preserved everywhere from the vice of its pollution, by an exquisite delicacy of natural sentiment which clings to him under every disadvantage. There is not a more masterly touch in fiction, and it is by such that this delightful fancy is consistently worked out to the last, than Oliver's agony of childish grief on being brought away from the branch-workhouse, the wretched home associated only with suffering and starvation, and with no kind word or look, but containing still his little companions in misery.

Chief design of the story.

Its principal figures.

Of the figures the book has made familiar to every one it is not my purpose to speak. To name one or two will be enough. Bumble and his wife; Charley Bates and the Artful Dodger; the cowardly charity-boy, Noah Claypole, whose *Such agony, please sir* puts the whole of a school-life into one phrase; the so-called merry old jew, supple and blackhearted Fagin; and Bill Sikes, the bolder-faced bandy-legged ruffian, with his white hat and white shaggy dog,—who does not know them all, even to the least points of dress, look, and walk, and all the small peculiarities that express great points of character? I have omitted poor wretched Nancy; yet it is to be said of her, with such honest truthfulness her strength and weakness are shown, in the virtue that lies neighboured in her nature so closely by vice, that the people meant to

Nancy.

be entirely virtuous show poorly beside her. But, though Rose and her lover are trivial enough beside Bill and his mistress, being indeed the weak part of the story, it is the book's pre-eminent merit that vice is no where made attractive in it. Crime is not more intensely odious, all through, than it is also most wretched and most unhappy. Not merely when its exposure comes, when the latent recesses of guilt are laid bare, and all the agonies of remorse are witnessed; not in the great scenes only, but in those lighter passages where no such aim might seem to have guided the apparently careless hand; this is emphatically so. Whether it be the comedy or the tragedy of crime, terror and retribution dog closely at its heels. They are as plainly visible when Fagin is first shown in his den, boiling the coffee in the saucepan and stopping every now and then to listen when there is the least noise below,—the villainous confidence of habit never extinguishing in him the anxious watchings and listenings of crime,—as when we see him at the last in the condemned cell, like a poisoned human rat in a hole.

LONDON: 1838.

Rose and her lover.

The comedy and tragedy of crime.

A word may be added upon the attacks directed against the subject of the book, to which Dickens made reply in one of his later editions; declaring his belief that he had tried to do a service to society, and had certainly done no disservice, in depicting a knot of such associates in crime in all their deformity and squalid wretchedness, skulking uneasily through a miserable life to a painful and shameful death. It is indeed never the subject that can be objectionable, if the treatment is not so, as we may

Reply to attacks.

LONDON: 1838.

see by much popular writing since, where subjects unimpeachably high are brought low by degrading sensualism. When the object of a writer is to exhibit the vulgarity of vice, and not its pretensions to heroism or cravings for sympathy, he may measure his subject with the highest. We meet with a succession of swindlers and thieves in *Gil Blas;* we shake hands with highwaymen and housebreakers all round in the *Beggars' Opera;* we pack cards with La Ruse or pick pockets with Jonathan in Fielding's *Mr. Wild the Great;* we follow cruelty and vice from its least beginning to its grossest ends in the prints of Hogarth; but our morals stand none the looser for any of them. As the spirit of the Frenchman was pure enjoyment, the strength of the Englishmen lay in wisdom and satire. The low was set forth to pull down the false pretensions of the high. And though for the most part they differ in manner and design from Dickens in this tale, desiring less to discover the soul of goodness in things evil than to brand the stamp of evil on things apt to pass for good, their objects and results are substantially the same. Familiar with the lowest kind of abasement of life, the knowledge is used, by both him and them, to teach what constitutes its essential elevation; and by the very coarseness and vulgarity of the materials employed, we measure the gentlemanliness and beauty of the work that is done. The quack in morality will always call such writing immoral, and the impostors will continue to complain of its treatment of imposture; but for the rest of the world it will still teach the invaluable lesson of what men ought to be from what they are. We cannot learn it more than

The high and low.

Le Sage, Gay, and Fielding:

Likeness to them.

enough. We cannot too often be told that as the pride and grandeur of mere external circumstance is the falsest of earthly things, so the truth of virtue in the heart is the most lovely and lasting; and from the pages of *Oliver Twist* this teaching is once again to be taken by all who will look for it there.

London: 1838.

The superficial and the true.

And now, while *Oliver* was running a great career of popularity and success, the shadow of the tale of *Barnaby Rudge* which he was to write on similar terms, and to begin in the *Miscellany* when the other should have ended, began to darken everything around him. We had much discussion respecting it, and I had no small difficulty in restraining him from throwing up the agreement altogether; but the real hardship of his position, and the considerate construction to be placed on every effort made by him to escape from obligations incurred in ignorance of the sacrifices implied by them, will be best understood from his own frank and honest statement. On the 21st of January 1839, enclosing me the copy of a letter which he proposed to send to Mr. Bentley the following morning, he thus wrote. 'From what I have already said to you, 'you will have been led to expect that I entertained some 'such intention. I know you will not endeavour to 'dissuade me from sending it. Go it MUST. It is no 'fiction to say that at present I *cannot* write this tale 'The immense profits which *Oliver* has realized to it 'publisher and is still realizing; the paltry, wretched 'miserable sum it brought to me (not equal to what I 'every day paid for a novel that sells fifteen hundred 'copies at most); the recollection of this, and the con

Again the shadow of *Barnaby Rudge*.

C. D. to J. F.

LONDON: 1838.

C. D. to J. F.

'sciousness that I have still the slavery and drudgery 'of another work on the same journeyman-terms; the 'consciousness that my books are enriching everybody 'connected with them but myself, and that I, with such 'a popularity as I have acquired, am struggling in old

An old story.

'toils, and wasting my energies in the very height and 'freshness of my fame, and the best part of my life, to 'fill the pockets of others, while for those who are nearest 'and dearest to me I can realize little more than a genteel 'subsistence: all this puts me out of heart and spirits. 'And I cannot—cannot and will not—under such circum- 'stances that keep me down with an iron hand, distress 'myself by beginning this tale until I have had time to 'breathe; and until the intervention of the summer, and 'some cheerful days in the country, shall have restored 'me to a more genial and composed state of feeling.

Proposed delay of *Barnaby*.

'There—for six months *Barnaby Rudge* stands over. 'And but for you, it should stand over altogether. For I 'do most solemnly declare that morally, before God and 'man, I hold myself released from such hard bargains as 'these, after I have done so much for those who drove 'them. This net that has been wound about me, so 'chafes me, so exasperates and irritates my mind, that to 'break it at whatever cost—*that* I should care nothing for '—is my constant impulse. But I have not yielded to it. 'I merely declare that I must have a postponement very 'common in all literary agreements; and for the time I 'have mentioned—six months from the conclusion of '*Oliver* in the *Miscellany*—I wash my hands of any 'fresh accumulation of labour, and resolve to proceed as

'cheerfully as I can with that which already presses upon 'me.'* LONDON: 1838.

To describe what followed upon this is not necessary. It will suffice to state the results. Upon the appearance in the *Miscellany*, in the early months of 1839, of the last portion of *Oliver Twist*, its author, having been relieved altogether from his engagement to the magazine, handed over, in a familiar epistle from a parent to his child, the editorship to Mr. Ainsworth; and the still subsisting agreement to write *Barnaby Rudge* was, upon the overture of Mr. Bentley himself in June of the following year, 1840, also put an end to, on payment by Dickens, for the copyright of *Oliver Twist* and such printed stock as remained of the edition then on hand, of two thousand two hundred and fifty pounds. What was further incident to this transaction will be told hereafter; and a few words may meanwhile be taken, not without significance in regard to it, from the parent's familiar epistle. It describes the child as aged two years and two months (so long had he watched over it); gives sundry pieces of advice concerning its circulation, and the importance

Resignation of the *Miscellany*.

Barnaby given up by Mr. Bentley.

Parent's epistle to the child.

* Upon receiving this letter I gently reminded him that I had made objection at the time to the arrangement on the failure of which he empowered me to bring about the settlement it was now proposed to supersede. I cannot give his reply, as it would be unbecoming to repeat the warmth of its expression to myself, but I preserve its first few lines to guard against any possible future misstatement. 'If you suppose that anything in my letter could by the 'utmost latitude of construction imply the smallest dissatisfaction on my part, 'for God's sake dismiss such a thought from your mind. I have never had a 'momentary approach to doubt or discontent where you have been mediating 'for me . . . . I could say more, but you would think me foolish and rhapso-'dical; and such feeling as I have for you is better kept within one's own 'breast than vented in imperfect and inexpressive words.'

C. D. to J. F.

LONDON: 1838.

thereto of light and pleasant articles of food; and concludes, after some general moralizing on the shiftings and changes of this world having taken so wonderful a turn that mail-coach guards were become no longer judges of horse-flesh: 'I reap no gain or profit by parting from 'you, nor will any conveyance of your property be re-'quired, for in this respect you have always been literally 'Bentley's Miscellany and never mine.'

CHAPTER IX.

NICHOLAS NICKLEBY.

1838 AND 1839.

I WELL recollect the doubt there was, mixed with the eager expectation which the announcement of his second serial story had awakened, whether the event would justify all that interest; and if indeed it were possible that the young writer could continue to walk steadily under the burthen of the popularity laid upon him. The first number dispersed this cloud of a question in a burst of sunshine; and as much of the gaiety of nations as had been eclipsed by old Mr. Pickwick's voluntary exile to Dulwich, was restored by the cheerful confidence with which young Mr. Nicholas Nickleby stepped into his shoes. Everything that had given charm to the first book was here, with more attention to the important requisite of a story, and more wealth as well as truth of character.

LONDON: 1838-9.

Doubts of *Nickleby*:

Dispelled.

How this was poured forth in each successive number, it hardly needs that I should tell. To recall it now, is to talk of what since has so interwoven itself with common speech and thought, as to have become almost part of the daily life of us all. It was well said of him, soon after his

LONDON: 1838-9.

death, in mentioning how largely his compositions had furnished one of the chief sources of intellectual enjoyment to this generation, that his language had become part of the language of every class and rank of his countrymen, and his characters were a portion of our contemporaries. 'It seems scarcely possible,' continued this otherwise not too indulgent commentator, 'to 'believe that there never were any such persons as Mr 'Pickwick and Mrs. Nickleby and Mrs. Gamp. They are 'to us not only types of English life, but types actually 'existing. They at once revealed the existence of such 'people, and made them thoroughly comprehensible. They 'were not studies of persons, but persons. And yet they 'were idealized in the sense that the reader did not think 'that they were drawn from the life. They were alive; 'they were themselves.' The writer might have added that this is proper to all true masters of fiction who work in the higher regions of their calling.

Remark of the *Saturday Review*.

Idealization of the real.

Nothing certainly could express better what the new book was at this time making manifest to its thousands of readers; not simply an astonishing variety in the creations of character, but what it was that made these creations so real; not merely the writer's wealth of genius, but the secret and form of his art. There never was any one who had less need to talk about his characters, because never were characters so surely revealed by themselves; and it was thus their reality made itself felt at once. They talked so well that everybody took to repeating what they said, as the writer just quoted has pointed out; and the sayings being the constituent elements of the characters,

Characters self-revealed.

these also of themselves became part of the public. This, which must always be a novelist's highest achievement, was the art carried to exquisite perfection on a more limited stage by Miss Austen; and, under widely different conditions both of art and work, it was pre-eminently that of Dickens. I told him, on reading the first dialogue of Mrs. Nickleby and Miss Knag, that he had been lately reading Miss Bates in *Emma*, but I found that he had not at this time made the acquaintance of that fine writer.

LONDON: 1838-9.

Miss Bates and Mrs. Nickleby.

Who that recollects the numbers of *Nickleby* as they appeared can have forgotten how each number added to the general enjoyment? All that had given *Pickwick* its vast popularity, the overflowing mirth, hearty exuberance of humour, and genial kindliness of satire, had here the advantage of a better laid design, more connected incidents, and greater precision of character. Everybody seemed immediately to know the Nickleby family as well as his own. Dotheboys, with all that rendered it, like a piece by Hogarth, both ludicrous and terrible, became a household word. Successive groups of Mantalinis, Kenwigses, Crummleses, introduced each its little world of reality, lighted up everywhere with truth and life, with capital observation, the quaintest drollery, and quite boundless mirth and fun. The brothers Cheeryble brought with them all the charities. With Smike came the first of those pathetic pictures that filled the world with pity for what cruelty, ignorance, or neglect may inflict upon the young. And Newman Noggs ushered in that class of the creatures of his fancy in which he took himself perhaps the most delight, and which the oftener he dealt with the more he

Dotheboys.

Smike and Newman Noggs.

LONDON: 1838-9.

A favourite type of character.

seemed to know how to vary and render attractive; gentlemen by nature, however shocking bad their hats or ungenteel their dialects; philosophers of modest endurance, and needy but most respectable coats; a sort of humble angels of sympathy and self-denial, though without a particle of splendour or even good looks about them, except what an eye as fine as their own feelings might discern. 'My friends,' wrote Sydney Smith, describing to Dickens the anxiety of some ladies of his acquaintance to meet him at dinner, 'have not the 'smallest objection to be put into a number, but on the 'contrary would be proud of the distinction; and Lady 'Charlotte, in particular, you may marry to Newman 'Noggs.' Lady Charlotte was not a more real person to Sydney than Newman Noggs; and all the world that Dickens attracted to his books could draw from them the same advantage as the man of wit and genius. It has been lately objected that humanity is not seen in them in its highest or noblest types, and the assertion may hereafter be worth considering; but what is very certain is, that they have inculcated humanity in familiar and engaging forms to thousands and tens of thousands of their readers, who can hardly have failed each to make his little world around him somewhat the better for their teaching. From first to last they were never for a moment alien to either the sympathies or the understandings of any class; and there were crowds of people at this time that could not have told you what imagination meant, who were adding month by month to their limited stores the boundless gains of imagination.

Sydney Smith to C. D.

One other kindliest product of humour in *Nickleby*, not to be passed over in even thus briefly recalling a few first impressions of it, was the good little miniature painter Miss La Creevy, living by herself, overflowing with affections she has nobody to bestow on, but always cheerful by dint of industry and good heartedness. When she is disappointed in the character of a woman she has been to see, she eases her mind by saying a very cutting thing at her expense *in a soliloquy:* and thereby illustrates one of the advantages of having lived alone so long, that she made always a confidant of herself; was as sarcastic as she could be, by herself, on people who offended her; pleased herself, and did no harm. Here was one of those touches, made afterwards familiar to the readers of Dickens by innumerable similar fancies, which added affection to their admiration for the writer, and enabled them to anticipate the feeling with which posterity would regard him as indeed the worthy companion of the Goldsmiths and Fieldings. There was a piece of writing, too, within not many pages of it, of which Leigh Hunt exclaimed on reading it that it surpassed the best things of the kind in Smollett that he was able to call to mind. This was the letter of Miss Squeers to Ralph Nickleby, giving him her version of the chastisement inflicted by Nicholas on the schoolmaster. 'My pa requests me to write to you, 'the doctors considering it doubtful whether he will ever 'recuvver the use of his legs which prevents his holding a 'pen. We are in a state of mind beyond everything, and 'my pa is one mask of brooses both blue and green like-'wise two forms are steepled in his Goar. . . . Me and my

LONDON: 1838.

Miss La Creevy.

Advantage of living by oneself.

Remark of Leigh Hunt.

Miss Squeers.

LONDON: 1838-9.

'brother were then the victims of his feury since which 'we have suffered very much which leads us to the arrow-'ing belief that we have received some injury in our 'insides, especially as no marks of violence are visible 'externally. I am screaming out loud all the time I 'write and so is my brother which takes off my attention 'rather and I hope will excuse mistakes". . . .

Early and later books.

Thus rapidly may be indicated some elements that contributed to the sudden and astonishingly wide popularity of these books. I purposely reserve from my present notices of them, which are biographical rather than critical, any statement of the reasons for which I think them inferior in imagination and fancy to some of the later works; but there was continued and steady growth in them on the side of humour, observation, and character, while freshness and raciness of style continued to be an important help. There are faults of occasional exaggeration in the writing, but none that do not spring from animal spirits and good humour, or a pardonable excess, here and there, on the side of earnestness; and it has the rare virtue, whether gay or grave, of being always thoroughly intelligible and for the most part thoroughly natural, of suiting itself without effort to every change of mood, as quick, warm, and comprehensive, as the sympathies it is taxed to express. The tone also is excellent. We are never repelled by egotism or conceit, and misplaced ridicule never disgusts us. When good is going on, we are sure to see all the beauty of it; and when there is evil, we are in no danger of mistaking it for good. No one can paint more picturesquely by an apposite

Character of the writing.

epithet, or illustrate more happily by a choice allusion. Whatever he knows or feels, too, is always at his fingers' ends, and is present through whatever he is doing. What Rebecca says to Ivanhoe of the black knight's mode of fighting would not be wholly inapplicable to Dickens's manner of writing. 'There is more than 'mere strength, there seems as if the whole soul and 'spirit of the champion were given to every blow he 'deals.' This, when a man deals his blows with a pen, is the sort of handling that freshens with new life the oldest facts, and breathes into thoughts the most familiar an emotion not felt before. There seemed to be not much to add to our knowledge of London until his books came upon us, but each in this respect outstripped the other in its marvels. In *Nickleby* the old city reappears under every aspect; and whether warmth and light are playing over what is good and cheerful in it, or the veil is uplifted from its darker scenes, it is at all times our privilege to see and feel it as it absolutely is. Its interior hidden life becomes familiar as its commonest outward forms, and we discover that we hardly knew anything of the places we supposed that we knew the best.

London: 1838-9.

Pictures of London.

Of such notices as his letters give of his progress with *Nickleby*, which occupied him from February 1838 to October 1839, something may now be said. Soon after the agreement for it was signed, before the Christmas of 1837 was over, he went down into Yorkshire with Mr. Hablot Browne to look up the Cheap Schools in that county to which public attention had been painfully drawn by a law case in the previous year; which had

Materials gathered in Yorkshire.

LONDON: 1838-9.

before been notorious for cruelties committed in them, whereof he had heard as early as in his childish days;* and which he was bent upon destroying if he could. I soon heard the result of his journey; and the substance of that letter, returned to him for the purpose, is in his preface to the story written for the collected edition. He came back confirmed in his design, and in February set to work upon his first chapter. On his birthday he wrote to me. 'I *have* begun! I wrote four slips last night, so you see 'the beginning is made. And what is more, I can go on: 'so I hope the book is in training at last.' 'The first 'chapter of *Nicholas* is done,' he wrote two days later. 'It took time, but I think answers the purpose as well 'as it could.' Then, after a dozen days more: 'I wrote 'twenty slips of *Nicholas* yesterday, left only four to 'do this morning (up at 8 o'clock too!), and have ordered 'my horse at one.' I joined him as he expected, and we read together at dinner that day the first number of *Nicholas Nickleby*.

Beginning the book: 7 Feb. 1838.

A difficulty at starting.

In the following number there was a difficulty which it was marvellous should not oftener have occurred to him in this form of publication. 'I could not write a line till 'three o'clock,' he says, describing the close of that number, 'and have yet five slips to finish, and don't know 'what to put in them, for I have reached the point I 'meant to leave off with.' He found easy remedy for

C. D. *loq.*

* 'I cannot call to mind now how I came to hear about Yorkshire schools 'when I was a not very robust child, sitting in bye-places near Rochester-'castle, with a head full of Partridge, Strap, Tom Pipes, and Sancho Panza; 'but I know that my first impressions of them were picked up at that time.'

such a miscalculation at his outset, and it was nearly his last as well as first misadventure of the kind: his difficulty in *Pickwick*, as he once told me, having always been, not the running short, but the running over: not the whip but the drag that was wanted. Sufflaminandus erat, as Ben Jonson said of Shakespeare. And in future works, with such marvellous nicety could he do always what he had planned, strictly within the space available, that only another similar instance is remembered by me. The third number introduced the school; and 'I remain 'dissatisfied until you have seen and read number three,' was his way of announcing to me his own satisfaction with that first handling of Dotheboys-hall. Nor had it the least part in my admiration of his powers at this time, that he never wrote without the printer at his heels; that, always in his later works two or three numbers in advance, he was never a single number in advance with this story; that the more urgent the call upon him the more readily he rose to it; and that his astonishing animal spirits never failed him. As late in the November month of 1838 as the 20th, he thus wrote to me: 'I have just 'begun my second chapter; cannot go out to-night; must 'get on; think there *will* be a *Nickleby* at the end of this 'month now (I doubted it before); and want to make a 'start towards it if I possibly can.' That was on Tuesday; and on Friday morning in the same week, explaining to me the failure of something that had been promised the previous day, he tells me: 'I was writing incessantly until 'it was time to dress; and have not yet got the subject 'of my last chapter, which *must be* finished to-night.'

London: 1838-9.

Never in advance with *Nickleby*.

C. D. to J. F.

LONDON: 1838-9.

A theatrical adaptation.

But this was not all. Between that Tuesday and Friday an indecent assault had been committed on his book by a theatrical adapter named Stirling, who seized upon it without leave while yet only a third of it was written; hacked, cut, and garbled its dialogue to the shape of one or two farcical actors; invented for it a plot and an ending of his own, and produced it at the Adelphi; where the outraged author, hard pressed as he was with an unfinished number, had seen it in the interval between the two letters I have quoted. He would not have run such a risk in later years, but he threw off lightly at present even such offences to his art; and though I was with him at a representation of his *Oliver Twist* the following month at the Surrey-theatre, when in the middle of the first scene he laid himself down upon the floor in a corner of the box and never rose from it until the drop-scene fell, he had been able to sit through *Nickleby*, and to see a kind of merit in some of the actors. Mr. Yates had a sufficiently humorous meaning in his wildest extravagance, and Mr. O. Smith could put into his queer angular oddities enough of a hard dry pathos, to conjure up shadows at least of Mantalini and Newman Noggs; of Ralph Nickleby there was indeed nothing visible save a wig, a spencer, and a pair of boots, but there was a quaint actor named Wilkinson who proved equal to the drollery though not to the fierce brutality of Squeers; and even Dickens, in the letter that amazed me by telling me of his visit to the theatre, was able to praise 'the skilful management and dressing 'of the boys, the capital manner and speech of Fanny 'Squeers, the dramatic representation of her card-party

Enjoying a play.

Actors of *Nickleby*.

'in Squeers's parlour, the careful making-up of all the 'people, and the exceedingly good tableaux formed from 'Browne's sketches . . . Mrs. Keeley's first appearance 'beside the fire (see wollum), and all the rest of Smike, 'was excellent; bating sundry choice sentiments and rub-'bish regarding the little robins in the fields which have 'been put in the boy's mouth by Mr. Stirling the adapter.' His toleration could hardly be extended to the robins, and their author he very properly punished by introducing and denouncing him at Mr. Crummles's farewell supper.

LONDON: 1838-9. C. D. 109.

The story was well in hand at the next letter to be quoted, for I limit myself to those only with allusions that are characteristic or illustrative. 'I must be alone 'in my glory to-day,' he wrote, 'and see what I can 'do. I perpetrated a great amount of work yesterday, 'and have every day indeed since Monday, but I must 'buckle-to again and endeavour to get the steam up. If 'this were to go on long, I should "bust" the boiler. I 'think Mrs. Nickleby's love-scene will come out rather 'unique.' The steam doubtless rose dangerously high when such happy inspiration came. It was but a few numbers earlier than this, while that eccentric lady was imparting her confidences to Miss Knag, that Sydney Smith confessed himself vanquished by a humour against which his own had long striven to hold out. '*Nickleby* is *very* '*good*,' he wrote to Sir George Phillips after the sixth number. 'I stood out against Mr. Dickens as long as I 'could, but he has conquered me.'*

Writing Mrs. Nickleby's love-scene.

Sydney Smith vanquished.

* Moore in his *Diary* (April 1837) describes Sydney crying down Dickens at a dinner in the Row, 'and evidently without having given him a fair trial.'

BROADSTAIRS: 1839.

The close of the story was written at Broadstairs, from which (he had taken a house 'two doors from the Albion-'hotel, where we had that merry night two years ago') he wrote to me on the 9th September 1839. 'I am hard C. D. to J. F. 'at it, but these windings-up wind slowly, and I shall 'think I have done great things if I have entirely finished 'by the 20th. Chapman and Hall came down yesterday 'with Browne's sketches, and dined here. They imparted 'their intentions as to a Nicklebeian fête which will make 'you laugh heartily—so I reserve them till you come. It 'has been blowing great guns for the last three days, and 'last night (I wish you could have seen it!) there was such 'a sea! I staggered down to the pier, and, creeping under 'the lee of a large boat which was high and dry, watched 'it breaking for nearly an hour. Of course I came back 'wet through.' On the afternoon of Wednesday the 18th he wrote again. 'I shall not finish entirely before Friday, 'sending Hicks the last twenty pages of manuscript by 'the night coach. I have had pretty stiff work as you may 'suppose, and I have taken great pains. The discovery 'is made, Ralph is dead, the loves have come all right, Tim 'Linkinwater has proposed, and I have now only to break 'up Dotheboys and the book together. I am very anxious Close of the book. 'that you should see this conclusion before it leaves my 'hands, and I plainly see therefore that I must come to 'town myself on Saturday if I would not endanger the 'appearance of the number. So I have written to Hicks 'to send proofs to your chambers as soon as he can that 'evening; and if you don't object I will dine with you 'any time after five, and we will devote the night to a

'careful reading. I have not written to Macready, for 'they have not yet sent me the title page of dedication, 'which is merely "To W. C. Macready, Esq., the following '" pages are inscribed, as a slight token of admiration and '" regard, by his friend the Author." Meanwhile will you 'let him know that I have fixed the Nickleby dinner for 'Saturday the 5th of October. Place, the Albion in 'Aldersgate-street. Time, six for half-past exactly . . . I 'shall be more glad than I can tell you to see you again, 'and I look forward to Saturday, and the evenings that 'are to follow it, with most joyful anticipation. I have 'had a good notion for *Barnaby*, of which more anon.'

BROADSTAIRS: 1839.

A proposed celebration.

The shadow from the old quarter, we see, the unwritten *Barnaby* tale, intrudes itself still; though hardly, as of old, making other pleasanter anticipations less joyful. Such indeed at this time was his buoyancy of spirit that it cost him little, compared with the suffering it gave him at all subsequent similar times, to separate from the people who for twenty months had been a part of himself. The increased success they had achieved left no present room but for gladness and well-won pride; and so, to welcome them into the immortal family of the English novel, and open cheerily to their author 'fresh ~~fields~~ and pastures 'new,' we had the dinner-celebration. But there is small need now to speak, of what has left, to one of the few survivors, only the sadness of remembering that all who made the happiness of it are passed away. There was Talfourd, facile and fluent of kindliest speech, with whom we were in constant and cordial intercourse, and to whom, grateful for his copyright exertions in the house of

Parting from creatures of his fancy.

The Nickleby dinner.

Talfourd and Maclise.

London: 1839.

commons, he had dedicated *Pickwick:* there was Maclise, dear and familiar friend to us both, whose lately painted portrait of Dickens hung in the room: * and there was the painter of the Rent-day, who made a speech as good as his pictures, rich in colour and quaint with homely allusion, all about the reality of Dickens's genius, and how there had been nothing like him issuing his novels part by part since Richardson issued his novels volume by volume, and how in both cases people talked about the characters as if they were next-door neighbours or friends; and as many letters were written to the author of *Nickleby* to implore him not to kill poor Smike, as had been sent by young ladies to the author of *Clarissa* to 'save Love-'lace's soul alive.' These and others are gone. Of those who survive only three arise to my memory—Macready, who spoke his sense of the honour done him by the dedication in English as good as his delivery of it, Mr. Edward Chapman, and Mr. Thomas Beard.

Sir David Wilkie.

* This portrait was given to Dickens by his publishers, for whom it was painted with a view to an engraving for *Nickleby*, which however was poorly executed, and of a size too small to do the original any kind of justice. To the courtesy of its present possessor, the Rev. Sir Edward Repps Joddrell, and to the careful art of Mr. Robert Graves, A.R.A., I owe the illustration at the opening of this volume, in which the head is for the first time worthily expressed. In some sort to help also the reader's fancy to a complete impression, Maclise having caught as happily the figure as the face, a skilful outline of the painting has been executed for the present page by Mr. Jeens. 'As a likeness,' said Mr. Thackeray of the work, and no higher praise could be given to it, 'it is perfectly amazing. A looking-glass could not render a 'better fac-simile. We have here the real identical man Dickens, the inward 'as well as the outward of him.'

The painting by Maclise.

CHAPTER X.

DURING AND AFTER NICKLEBY.

1838 AND 1839.

THE name of his old gallery-companion may carry me back from the days to which the close of *Nickleby* had led me, to those when it was only beginning. 'This snow will 'take away the cold weather,' he had written, in that birthday letter of 1838 already quoted, 'and then for Twicken-'ham.' Here a cottage was taken, nearly all the summer was passed, and a familiar face there was Mr. Beard's. There, with Talfourd and with Thackeray and Jerrold, we had many friendly days, too; and the social charm of Maclise was seldom wanting. Nor was there anything that exercised a greater fascination over Dickens than the grand enjoyment of idleness, the ready self-abandonment to the luxury of laziness, which we both so laughed at in Maclise, under whose easy swing of indifference, always the most amusing at the most aggravating events and times, we knew that there was artist-work as eager, energy as unwearying, and observation almost as penetrating as Dickens's own. A greater enjoyment than the fellowship of Maclise at this period it would indeed be difficult to imagine. Dickens hardly saw more than he did, while yet

Twicken-ham; 1838.

Daniel Maclise

TWICKENHAM: 1838.

The charm of Maclise.

he seemed to be seeing nothing; and the small esteem in which this rare faculty was held by himself, a quaint oddity that gave to shrewdness itself in him an air of Irish simplicity, his unquestionable turn for literature, and a varied knowledge of it not always connected with such intense love and such unwearied practice of one special and absorbing art, combined to render him attractive far beyond the common. His fine genius and his handsome person, of neither of which at any time he seemed himself to be in the slightest degree conscious, completed the charm. Edwin Landseer, all the world's favourite, and the excellent Stanfield, came a few months later, in the Devonshire-terrace days; but another painter-friend was George Cattermole, who had then enough and to spare of fun as well as fancy to supply ordinary artists and humourists by the dozen, and wanted only a little more ballast and steadiness to have had all that could give attraction to good fellowship. A friend now especially welcome, too, was the novelist Mr. Ainsworth, who shared with us incessantly for the three following years in the companionship which began at his house; with whom we visited, during two of those years, friends of art and letters in his native Manchester, from among whom Dickens brought away his Brothers Cheeryble; and to whose sympathy in tastes and pursuits, accomplishments in literature, open-hearted generous ways, and cordial hospitality, many of the pleasures of later years were due. Frederick Dickens, to whom soon after this a treasury-clerkship was handsomely given, on Dickens's application, by Mr. Stanley of Alderley, known in and before those Manchester days, was for the

Other artist friends.

Mr. Harrison Ainsworth.

present again living with his father, but passed much time in his brother's home; and another familiar face was that of his old school companion at Mr. Dawson's in Henrietta-street, Mr. Mitton, through whom there was introduction of the relatives of a friend and partner Mr. Smithson, the gentleman connected with Yorkshire mentioned in his preface to *Nickleby*, who became very intimate in his house. These, his father and mother and their two younger sons, with members of his wife's family, and his married sisters and their husbands, Mr. and Mrs. Burnett and Mr. and Mrs. Austin, are figures that all associate themselves prominently with the days of Doughty-street and the cottages of Twickenham and Petersham as remembered by me in the summers of 1838 and 1839.

TWICKENHAM: 1838.

In the former of these years the sports were necessarily quieter* than at Petersham, where extensive garden-grounds admitted of much athletic competition, from the more difficult forms of which I in general modestly retired, but where Dickens for the most part held his own against

PETERSHAM: 1839.

* We had at Twickenham a balloon club for the children, of which I appear to have been elected the president on condition of supplying all the balloons, a condition which I seem so insufficiently to have complied with as to bring down upon myself the subjoined resolution. The Snodgering Blee and Popem Jee were the little brother and sister, for whom, as for their successors, he was always inventing these surprising descriptive epithets. 'Gammon 'Lodge, Saturday evening, June 23rd, 1838. Sir, I am requested to inform 'you that at a numerous meeting of the Gammon Aeronautical Assbciation 'for the Encouragement of Science and the Consumption of Spirits (of 'Wine)—Thomas Beard Esquire, Mrs. Charles Dickens, Charles Dickens, 'Esquire, the Snodgering Blee, Popem Jee, and other distinguished characters 'being present and assenting, the vote of censure of which I enclose a copy 'was unanimously passed upon you for gross negligence in the discharge of 'your duty, and most unjustifiable disregard of the best interests of the 'Society. I am, Sir, your most obedient Servant, Charles Dickens, Honorary 'Secretary. To John Forster, Esquire.'

Childish enjoyments.

PETERSHAM: 1839.

even such accomplished athletes as Maclise and Mr. Beard. Bar-leaping, bowling, and quoits, were among the games carried on with the greatest ardour; and in sustained energy, what is called keeping it up, Dickens certainly distanced every competitor. Even the lighter recreations of battledore and bagatelle were pursued with relentless activity; and at such amusements as the Petersham races, in those days rather celebrated, and which he visited daily while they lasted, he worked much harder himself than the running horses did.

Athletic sports.

Writes a farce for Covent-garden.

What else his letters of these years enable me to recall that could possess any interest now, may be told in a dozen sentences. He wrote a farce by way of helping the Covent-garden manager which the actors could not agree about, and which he turned afterwards into a story called the *Lamplighter*.

Entered at the Middle-temple.

He entered his name among the students at the inn of the Middle-temple, though he did not eat dinners there until many years later. We made together a circuit of nearly all the London prisons; and, in coming to the prisoners under remand while going over Newgate, accompanied by Macready and Mr. Hablot Browne,* were startled by a sudden tragic cry of 'My 'God! there's Wainewright!' In the shabby-genteel creature, with sandy disordered hair and dirty moustache, who had turned quickly round with a defiant stare at our entrance, looking at once mean and fierce, and quite capable of the cowardly murders he had committed, Macready had been horrified to recognize a man familiarly

We see Wainewright in Newgate.

* Not Mr. Procter, as, by an oversight of his own, Dickens caused to be said in an interesting paper on Wainewright which appeared in his weekly periodical.

known to him in former years, and at whose table he had dined. Between the completion of *Oliver* and its publication, Dickens went to see something of North Wales; and joining him at Liverpool, I returned with him.* Soon after his arrival he had pleasant communication with Lockhart, dining with him at Cruikshank's a little later; and this was the prelude to a *Quarterly* notice of *Oliver* by Mr. Ford, written at the instance of Lockhart but without the raciness he would have put into it, in which amende was made for previous less favourable remarks in that review. Dickens had not however waited for this to express publicly his hearty sympathy with Lockhart's handling of some passages in his admirable *Life of Scott* that had drawn down upon him the wrath of the Ballantynes. This he did in the *Examiner;* where also I find him noticing a book by Thomas Hood: 'rather poor, 'but I have not said so, because Hood is too, and ill 'besides.' In the course of the year he was taken into Devonshire to select a home for his father, on the removal of the latter (who had long given up his reporting duties) from his London residence; and this he found in a cottage at Alphington, near Exeter, where he placed the elder Dickens with his wife and their youngest son. The same year closed Macready's Covent-garden management, and at

LONDON: 1839.

Oliver Twist and the *Quarterly Review.*

'Up the Rhine.'

* I quote from a letter dated Llangollen, Friday morning, 3rd Nov. 1838. 'I wrote to you last night, but by mistake the letter has gone on Heaven 'knows where in my portmanteau. I have only time to say, go straight to 'Liverpool by the first Birmingham train on Monday morning, and at the 'Adelphi-hotel in that town you will find me. I trust to you to see my 'dear Kate, and bring the latest intelligence of her and the darlings. My best 'love to them.'

C. D. to J. F.

LONDON: 1839.

the dinner to the retiring manager, when the Duke of Cambridge took the chair, Dickens spoke with that wonderful instinct of knowing what to abstain from saying, as well as what to say, which made his after-dinner speeches quite unique. Nor should mention be omitted of the Shakespeare-society, now diligently attended, of which Procter, Talfourd, Macready, Thackeray, Henry Davison, Blanchard, Charles Knight, John Bell, Douglas Jerrold, Maclise, Stanfield, George Cattermole, the good Tom Landseer, Frank Stone, and other old friends were members, and where, out of much enjoyment and many disputings,* there arose, from Dickens and all of us, plenty of after-dinner oratory. The closing months of this year of 1839 had special interest for him. At the end of October another daughter was born to him, who bears the name of that dear friend of his and mine, Macready, whom he asked to be her godfather; and before the close of the year he had moved out of Doughty-street into Devonshire-terrace, a handsome house with a garden of considerable size, shut out from the New-road by a high brick wall facing the York-gate into Regent's-park. These various matters, and his attempts at the *Barnaby* novel on the

After-dinner speeches.

Shakespeare Society.

Incidents of 1839: Second daughter.

* One of these disputes is referred to by Charles Knight in his Autobiography; and I see in Dickens's letters the mention of another in which I seem to have been turned by his kindly counsel from some folly I was going to commit. 'I 'need not, I am sure, impress upon you the sincerity with which I make this 'representation. Our close and hearty friendship happily spares me the 'necessity. But I will add this—that feeling for you an attachment which 'no ties of blood or other relationship could ever awaken, and hoping to be to 'the end of my life your affectionate and chosen friend, I am convinced that 'I counsel you now as you would counsel me if I were in the like case; 'and I hope and trust that you will be led by an opinion which I am sure 'cannot be wrong when it is influenced by such feelings as I bear towards you, 'and so many warm and grateful considerations.'

conclusion of *Nickleby*, are the subjects of his letters between October and December. LONDON: 1839.

House-hunting.

'Thank God, all goes famously. I have worked at '*Barnaby* all day, and moreover seen a beautiful (and 'reasonable) house in Kent-terrace, where Macready once 'lived, but larger than his.' Again (this having gone off): '*Barnaby* has suffered so much from the house-hunting, 'that I mustn't chop to-day.' Then (for the matter of the Middle-temple) 'I return the form. It's the right 'temple, I take for granted. *Barnaby* moves, not at 'race-horse speed, but yet as fast (I think) as under these 'unsettled circumstances could possibly be expected.' Or again: 'All well. *Barnaby* has reached his tenth 'page. I have just turned lazy, and have passed into '*Christabel*, and thence to *Wallenstein*.' At last the choice was made. 'A house of great promise (and great 'premium), "undeniable" situation, and excessive splen-'dour, is in view. Mitton is in treaty, and I am in ecstatic 'restlessness. Kate wants to know whether you have any 'books to send her, so please to shoot here any literary 'rubbish on hand.' To these I will only add a couple of extracts from his letters while in Exeter arranging his father's and mother's new home. They are very humorous; and the vividness with which everything, once seen, was photographed in his mind and memory, is pleasantly shown in them.

Working slowly.

Devonshire-terrace in prospect.

'I took a little house for them this morning' (5th March, 1839: from the New-London-inn), 'and if they are not 'pleased with it I shall be grievously disappointed. Exactly 'a mile beyond the city on the Plymouth road there are

From Exeter: C. D. to J. F.

EXETER: 1839.

Home for his father and mother.

'two white cottages: one is theirs and the other belongs 'to their landlady. I almost forget the number of rooms, 'but there is an excellent parlour with two other rooms 'on the ground floor, there is really a beautiful little room 'over the parlour which I am furnishing as a drawing-'room, and there is a splendid garden. The paint and 'paper throughout is new and fresh and cheerful-looking, 'the place is clean beyond all description, and the neigh-'bourhood I suppose the most beautiful in this most beau-'tiful of English counties. Of the landlady, a Devonshire 'widow with whom I had the honour of taking lunch 'today, I must make most especial mention. She is a fat, 'infirm, splendidly-fresh-faced country dame, rising sixty 'and recovering from an attack "on the nerves"—I 'thought they never went off the stones, but I find they 'try country air with the best of us. In the event of my 'mother's being ill at any time, I really think the vicinity 'of this good dame, the very picture of respectability and 'good humour, will be the greatest possible comfort. *Her* 'furniture and domestic arrangements are a capital picture, 'but that I reserve till I see you, when I anticipate a 'hearty laugh. She bears the highest character with the 'bankers and the clergyman (who formerly lived in *my* 'cottage himself), and is a kind-hearted worthy capital 'specimen of the sort of life, or I have no eye for the real 'and no idea of finding it out.

A landlady and her friends.

'This good lady's brother and his wife live in the next 'nearest cottage, and the brother transacts the good lady's 'business, the nerves not admitting of her transacting it 'herself, although they leave her in her debilitated state

'something sharper than the finest lancet. Now the 'brother, having coughed all night till he coughed himself 'into such a perspiration that you might have "wringed '"his hair," according to the asseveration of eye witnesses, 'his wife was sent for to negociate with me; and if you 'could have seen me sitting in the kitchen with the two old women, endeavouring to make them comprehend that I had no evil intentions or covert designs, and that I had come down all that way to take some cottage and had *happened* to walk down that road and see that particular one, you would never have forgotten it. Then, to see the 'servant girl run backwards and forwards to the sick man, 'and when the sick man had signed one agreement which 'I drew up and the old woman instantly put away in a 'disused tea-caddy, to see the trouble and the number of 'messages it took before the sick man could be brought 'to sign another (a duplicate) that we might have one 'apiece, was one of the richest scraps of genuine drollery 'I ever saw in all my days. How, when the business was 'over, we became conversational; how I was facetious, and 'at the same time virtuous and domestic; how I drank 'toasts in the beer, and stated on interrogatory that I was 'a married man and the father of two blessed infants; 'how the ladies marvelled thereat; how one of the ladies, 'having been in London, enquired where I lived, and, 'being told, remembered that Doughty-street and the 'Foundling-hospital were in the Old-Kent-road, which I 'didn't contradict—all this and a great deal more must 'make us laugh when I return, as it makes me laugh now 'to think of. Of my subsequent visit to the upholsterer

EXETER: 1839.

A cross-examination.

Signing agreements.

Autobiographical.

EXETER: 1839.

Visit *to* an upholsterer.

'recommended by the landlady; of the absence of the 'upholsterer's wife, and the timidity of the upholsterer 'fearful of acting in her absence; of my sitting behind a 'high desk in a little dark shop, calling over the articles 'in requisition and checking off the prices as the 'upholsterer exhibited the goods and called them out; of 'my coming over the upholsterer's daughter with many 'virtuous endearments, to propitiate the establishment and 'reduce the bill; of these matters I say nothing, either, 'for the same reason as that just mentioned. The dis- 'covery of the cottage I seriously regard as a blessing (not 'to speak it profanely) upon our efforts in this cause. I 'had heard nothing from the bank, and walked straight 'there, by some strange impulse, directly after breakfast. 'I am sure they may be happy there; for if I were older, 'and my course of activity were run, I am sure I could, 'with God's blessing, for many and many a year. . . .

The theatre.

'The theatre is open here, and Charles Kean is to-night 'playing for his last night. If it had been the "rig'lar" 'drama I should have gone, but I was afraid Sir Giles 'Overreach might upset me, so I stayed away. My 'quarters are excellent, and the head-waiter is *such* a 'waiter! Knowles (not Sheridan Knowles, but Knowles 'of the Cheetham-hill-road*) is an ass to him. This 'sounds bold, but truth is stranger than fiction. By the 'bye, not the least comical thing that has occurred was

* This was the butler of Mr. Gilbert Winter, one of the kind Manchester friends whose hospitality we had enjoyed with Mr. Ainsworth, and whose shrewd, quaint, old-world ways come delightfully back to me as I write his once well-known and widely honoured name.

'the visit of the upholsterer (with some further calculations) 'since I began this letter. I think they took me here at 'the New-London for the Wonderful Being I am; they 'were amazingly sedulous; and no doubt they looked for my 'being visited by the nobility and gentry of the neighbour- 'hood. My first and only visitor came to-night: A ruddy- 'faced man in faded black, with extracts from a feather- 'bed all over him; an extraordinary and quite miraculously 'dirty face; a thick stick; and the personal appearance 'altogether of an amiable bailiff in a green old age. I 'have not seen the proper waiter since, and more than 'suspect I shall not recover this blow. He was announced '(by *the* waiter) as "a person." I expect my bill every 'minute. . . . .

EXETER: 1839.

Visit *from* an upholsterer.

Dignity in danger.

'The waiter is laughing outside the door with another 'waiter—this is the latest intelligence of my condition.'

CHAPTER XI.

NEW LITERARY PROJECT.

1839.

PETERSHAM: 1839.

THE time was now come for him seriously to busy himself with a successor to *Pickwick* and *Nickleby*, which he had not however waited thus long before turning over thoroughly in his mind. *Nickleby's* success had so far outgone even the expectation raised by *Pickwick's*, that, without some handsome practical admission of this fact at the close, its publishers could hardly hope to retain him. This had been frequently discussed by us, and was well understood. But, apart from the question of his resuming with them at all, he had persuaded himself it might be unsafe to resume in the old way, believing the public likely to tire of the same twenty numbers over again. There was also another and more sufficient reason for change which naturally had great weight with him, and this was the hope, that, by invention of a new mode as well as kind of serial publication, he might be able for a time to discontinue the writing of a long story with all its strain on his fancy, in any case to shorten and vary the length of the stories written by himself, and perhaps ultimately to retain all the profits of a continuous

Thoughts for the future.

publication without necessarily himself contributing every line that was to be written for it. These considerations had been discussed still more anxiously; and for several months some such project had been taking form in his thoughts. PETERSHAM: 1839.

While he was at Petersham (July 1839) he thus wrote to me. 'I have been thinking that subject over. Indeed 'I have been doing so to the great stoppage of *Nickleby* 'and the great worrying and fidgetting of myself. I have 'been thinking that if Chapman and Hall were to admit 'you into their confidence with respect to what they mean 'to do at the conclusion of *Nickleby*, without admitting 'me, it would help us very much. You know that I am 'well-disposed towards them, and that if they do some- 'thing handsome, even handsomer perhaps than they 'dreamt of doing, they will find it their interest, and will 'find me tractable. You know also that I have had 'straightforward offers from responsible men to publish 'anything for me at a per-centage on the profits, and take 'all the risk; but that I am unwilling to leave them, and 'have declared to you that if they behave with liberality 'to me I will not on any consideration, although to a 'certain extent I certainly and surely must gain by it. 'Knowing all this, I feel sure that if you were to put 'before them the glories of our new project, and, reminding 'them that when *Barnaby* is published I am clear of all 'engagements, were to tell them that if they wish to secure 'me and perpetuate our connection now is the time for 'them to step gallantly forward and make such proposals 'as will produce that result—I feel quite sure that if this

C. D. to J. F.

Suggestion for his publishers.

My mediation with them.

PETERSHAM: 1839.

'should be done by you, as you only can do it, the result will 'be of the most vital importance to me and mine, and that 'a very great deal may be effected, thus, to recompense 'your friend for very small profits and very large work as 'yet. I shall see you, please God, on Tuesday night; and 'if they wait upon you on Wednesday, I shall remain in 'town until that evening.'

They came; and the tenor of the interview was so favourable that I wished him to put in writing what from time to time had been discussed in connection with the new project. This led to the very interesting letter I shall now quote, written also in the same month from Petersham. I did not remember, until I lately read it, that the notion of a possible visit to America had been in his thoughts so early.

C. D. to J. F.

'I should be willing to commence on the thirty-first of 'March, 1840, a new publication consisting entirely of 'original matter, of which one number price threepence

Proposed weekly publication.

'should be published every week, and of which a certain 'amount of numbers should form a volume, to be published at regular intervals. The best general idea of the 'plan of the work might be given perhaps by reference to 'the *Spectator*, the *Tatler*, and Goldsmith's *Bee*; but it 'would be far more popular both in the subjects of which 'it treats and its mode of treating them.

Old favourites to be revived.

'I should propose to start, as the *Spectator* does, with 'some pleasant fiction relative to the origin of the publi-'cation; to introduce a little club or knot of characters 'and to carry their personal histories and proceedings 'through the work; to introduce fresh characters con-

'stantly; to reintroduce Mr. Pickwick and Sam Weller, 'the latter of whom might furnish an occasional commu- 'nication with great effect; to write amusing essays on 'the various foibles of the day as they arise; to take 'advantage of all passing events; and to vary the form 'of the papers by throwing them into sketches, essays, 'tales, adventures, letters from imaginary correspondents 'and so forth, so as to diversify the contents as much as 'possible.

PETERSHAM: 1839.

C. D. to J. F.

'In addition to this general description of the contents, 'I may add that under particular heads I should strive to 'establish certain features in the work, which should be 'so many veins of interest and amusement running 'through the whole. Thus the Chapters on Chambers 'which I have long thought and spoken of, might be very 'well incorporated with it; and a series of papers has 'occurred to me containing stories and descriptions of 'London as it was many years ago, as it is now, and as 'it will be many years hence, to which I would give some 'such title as The Relaxations of Gog and Magog, 'dividing them into portions like the *Arabian Nights*, 'and supposing Gog and Magog to entertain each other 'with such narrations in Guildhall all night long, and to 'break off every morning at daylight. An almost in- 'exhaustible field of fun, raillery, and interest, would be 'laid open by pursuing this idea.

Chapters on Chambers.

Relaxations of Gog and Magog.

'I would also commence, and continue from time to time, 'a series of satirical papers purporting to be translated 'from some Savage Chronicles, and to describe the admi- 'nistration of justice in some country that never existed,

Savag Chronicles.

PETERSHAM: 1839.

C. D. to J. F.

'and record the proceedings of its wise men. The object 'of this series (which if I can compare it with anything 'would be something between *Gulliver's Travels* and the '*Citizen of the World*) would be to keep a special look-'out upon the magistrates in town and country, and never 'to leave those worthies alone.

'The quantity of each number that should be written 'by myself would be a matter for discussion and arrange-'ment. Of course I should pledge and bind myself upon 'that head. Nobody but myself would ever pursue *these* '*ideas*, but I must have assistance of course, and there 'must be some contents of a different kind. Their 'general nature might be agreed upon beforehand, but I 'should stipulate that this assistance is chosen solely by 'myself, and that the contents of every number are as 'much under my own control, and subject to as little 'interference, as those of a number of *Pickwick* or '*Nickleby*.

Others as well as himself to write.

'In order to give fresh novelty and interest to this 'undertaking, I should be ready to contract to go at any 'specified time (say in the midsummer or autumn of 'the year, when a sufficient quantity of matter in advance 'should have been prepared, or earlier if it were thought 'fit) either to Ireland or to America, and to write from 'thence a series of papers descriptive of the places and 'people I see, introducing local tales, traditions, and 'legends, something after the plan of Washington Irving's '*Alhambra*. I should wish the republication of these 'papers in a separate form, with others to render the 'subject complete (if we should deem it advisable), to

Visits to Ireland or America.

'form part of the arrangement for the work; and I 'should wish the same provision to be made for the re- 'publication of the Gog and Magog series, or indeed any 'that I undertook. PETERSHAM: 1839. C. D. to J. F.

'This is a very rough and slight outline of the project 'I have in view. I am ready to talk the matter over, to 'give any further explanations, to consider any sugges- 'tions, or to go into the details of the subject immediately. 'I say nothing of the novelty of such a publication now- 'a-days or its chances of success. Of course I think them 'very great, very great indeed; almost beyond calcula- 'tion, or I should not seek to bind myself to anything so 'extensive.

'The heads of the terms upon which I should be 'prepared to go into this undertaking would be—That 'I be made a proprietor in the work and a sharer in the 'profits. That when I bind myself to write a certain 'portion of every number, I am ensured, *for* that writing 'in every number, a certain sum of money. That those 'who assist me, and contribute the remainder of every 'number, shall be paid by the publishers immediately 'after its appearance, according to a scale to be calcu- 'lated and agreed upon, on presenting my order for the 'amount to which they may be respectively entitled. Or, 'if the publishers prefer it, that they agree to pay 'me a certain sum for the *whole* of every number, and 'leave me to make such arrangements for that part 'which I may not write, as I think best. Of course I 'should require that for these payments, or any other 'outlay connected with the work, I am not held account-

To have a property in the work.

Money payments.

PETERSHAM: 1839.

C. D. to J. F.

'able in any way; and that no portion of them is to be 'considered as received by me on account of the profits. 'I need not add that some arrangement would have to 'be made, if I undertake my Travels, relative to the 'expenses of travelling.

'Now I want our publishing friends to take these things 'into consideration, and to give me the views and pro- 'posals they would be disposed to entertain when they 'have maturely considered the matter.'

The result of their consideration was on the whole satisfactory. An additional fifteen hundred pounds was to be paid at the close of *Nickleby*, the new adventure was to be undertaken, and Cattermole was to be joined with Browne as its illustrator. Nor was its plan much modified before starting, though it was felt by us all that, for the opening numbers at least, Dickens would have to be sole contributor; and that, whatever otherwise might be its attraction, or the success of the detached papers proposed by him, some reinforcement of them from time to time, by means of a story with his name continued at reasonable if not regular intervals, would be found absolutely necessary. Without any such planned story, however, the work did actually begin; its course afterwards being determined by circumstances stronger than any project he had formed. The 'agreement, drawn up in contemplation of a mere miscellany of detached papers or essays, and in which no mention of any story appeared, was signed at the end of March; and its terms were such as to place him in his only proper and legitimate position in regard to all such contracts, of being necessarily a gainer in any case, and, in

Weekly publication to be started.

Nothing settled as to story by himself.

the event of success, the greatest gainer of all concerned in the undertaking. All the risk of every kind was to be undergone by the publishers; and, as part of the expenses to be defrayed by them of each weekly number, he was to receive fifty pounds. Whatever the success or failure, this was always to be paid. The numbers were then to be accounted for separately, and half the realized profits paid to him, the other half going to the publishers; each number being held strictly responsible for itself, and the loss upon it, supposing any, not carried to the general account. The work was to be continued for twelve months certain, with leave to the publishers then to close it; but if they elected to go on, he was himself bound to the enterprise for five years, and the ultimate copyright as well as profit was to be equally divided.

PETERSHAM: 1839.

Terms of agreement.

Six weeks before signature of this agreement, while a title was still undetermined, I had this letter from him.

LONDON.

C. D. to J. F.

'I will dine with you. I intended to spend the evening 'in strict meditation (as I did last night); but perhaps I 'had better go out, lest all work and no play should make 'me a dull boy. *I* have a list of titles too, but the final 'title I have determined on—or something very near it. 'I have a notion of this old file in the queer house, open- 'ing the book by an account of himself, and, among other 'peculiarities, of his affection for an old quaint queer-cased 'clock; showing how that when they have sat alone to- 'gether in the long evenings, he has got accustomed to its 'voice, and come to consider it as the voice of a friend; 'how its striking, in the night, has seemed like an assur- 'ance to him that it was still a cheerful watcher at his

Notion for his hero.

LONDON: 1839.
C. D. to J. F.

'chamber-door; and how its very face has seemed to have 'something of welcome in its dusty features, and to relax 'from its grimness when he has looked at it from his 'chimney-corner. Then I mean to tell how that he has 'kept odd manuscripts in the old, deep, dark, silent closet 'where the weights are; and taken them from thence to 'read (mixing up his enjoyments with some notion of 'his clock); and how, when the club came to be formed, 'they, by reason of their punctuality and his regard 'for this dumb servant, took their name from it. And

A name hit upon.

'thus I shall call the book either *Old Humphrey's* '*Clock*, or *Master Humphrey's Clock*; beginning with 'a woodcut of old Humphrey and his clock, and ex- 'plaining the why and wherefore. All Humphrey's own 'papers will be dated then From my clock-side, and I 'have divers thoughts about the best means of intro- 'ducing the others. I thought about this all day yester- 'day and all last night till I went to bed. I am sure

Sanguine of success.

'I can make a good thing of this opening, which I have 'thoroughly warmed up to in consequence.'

A few days later: 'I incline rather more to *Master* '*Humphrey's Clock* than *Old Humphrey's*—if so be that 'there is no danger of the pensive confounding master 'with a boy.' After two days more: 'I was thinking all 'yesterday, and have begun at *Master Humphrey* to-day.' Then, a week later: 'I have finished the first number, 'but have not been able to do more in the space than 'lead up to the Giants, who are just on the scene.'

CHAPTER XII.

THE OLD CURIOSITY SHOP.

1840 AND 1841.

BATH: 1840.

A DAY or two after the date of the last letter quoted, Dickens and his wife, with Maclise and myself, visited Landor in Bath, and it was during three happy days we passed together there that the fancy which was shortly to take the form of little Nell first occurred to its author.*

Visit to Landor.

* I have mentioned the fact in my *Life of Landor;* and to the passage I here add the comment made by Dickens when he read it. 'It was at a celebration 'of his birthday in the first of his Bath lodgings, 35 St. James's-square, that 'the fancy which took the form of little Nell in the *Curiosity Shop* first 'dawned on the genius of its creator. No character in prose fiction was a 'greater favourite with Landor. He thought that, upon her, Juliet might for a 'moment have turned her eyes from Romeo, and that Desdemona might have 'taken her hair-breadth escapes to heart, so interesting and pathetic did she 'seem to him; and when, some years later, the circumstance I have named 'was recalled to him, he broke into one of those whimsical bursts of comical 'extravagance out of which arose the fancy of Boythorn. With tremendous 'emphasis he confirmed the fact, and added that he had never in his life 'regretted anything so much as his having failed to carry out an intention he 'had formed respecting it; for he meant to have purchased that house, 35 'St. James's-square, and then and there to have burnt it to the ground, to the 'end that no meaner association should ever desecrate the birthplace of Nell. 'Then he would pause a little, become conscious of our sense of his absurdity, 'and break into a thundering peal of laughter.' Dickens had himself proposed to tell this story as a contribution to my biography of our common friend, but his departure for America prevented him. 'I see,' he wrote to me, as soon as the published book reached him, 'you have told, with what our friend would 'have called *won*-derful accuracy, the little St. James's-square story, which a 'certain faithless wretch was to have related.'

First thought of Little Nell.

C. D. to J. F. 9th May, 1869.

LONDON: 1840.

But as yet with the intention only of making out of it a tale of a few chapters. On the 1st of March we returned from Bath; and on the 4th I had this letter:

C. D. to J. F.

'If you can manage to give me a call in the course 'of the day or evening, I wish you would. I am la- 'boriously turning over in my mind how I can best 'effect the improvement we spoke of last night, which I 'will certainly make by hook or by crook, and which I 'would like you to see *before* it goes finally to the 'printer's. I have determined not to put that witch-story 'into number 3, for I am by no means satisfied of the 'effect of its contrast with Humphrey. I think of lengthen- 'ing Humphrey, finishing the description of the society, 'and closing with the little child-story, which is SURE to 'be effective, especially after the old man's quiet way.'

Hopeful of Master Humphrey.

Then there came hard upon this: 'What do you think of 'the following double title for the beginning of that little 'tale? "PERSONAL ADVENTURES OF MASTER HUMPHREY: '"*The Old Curiosity Shop.*" I have thought of *Master 'Humphrey's Tale, Master Humphrey's Narrative, 'A Passage in Master Humphrey's Life*—but I don't 'think any does as well as this. I have also thought 'of *The Old Curiosity Dealer and the Child* instead 'of *The Old Curiosity Shop.* Perpend. Topping waits.'

A title for his story.

——And thus was taking gradual form, with less direct consciousness of design on his own part than I can remember in any other instance of all his career, a story which was to add largely to his popularity, more than any other of his works to make the bond between himself and his readers one of personal attachment, and very widely to

increase the sense entertained of his powers as a pathetic as well as humorous writer. LONDON: 1840.

He had not written more than two or three chapters, when the capability of the subject for more extended treatment than he had at first proposed to give to it pressed itself upon him, and he resolved to throw everything else aside, devoting himself to the one story only. There were other strong reasons for this. Of the first number of the *Clock* nearly seventy thousand were sold; but with the discovery that there was no continuous tale the orders at once diminished, and a change must have been made even if the material and means for it had not been ready. There had been an interval of three numbers between the first and second chapters, which the society of Mr. Pickwick and the two Wellers made pleasant enough; but after the introduction of Dick Swiveller there were three consecutive chapters; and in the continued progress of the tale to its close there were only two more breaks, one between the fourth and fifth chapters and one between the eighth and ninth, pardonable and enjoyable now for the sake of Sam and his father. The re-introduction of these old favourites, it will have been seen, formed part of his original plan; of his abandonment of which his own description may be added, from his preface to the collected edition. 'The first chapter of this tale appeared 'in the fourth number of *Master Humphrey's Clock*, 'when I had already been made uneasy by the desultory 'character of that work, and when, I believe, my readers 'had thoroughly participated in the feeling. The com-'mencement of a story was a great satisfaction to me, and

First sale of *Master Humphrey's Clock*.

Its original plan abandoned.

LONDON: 1840.

'I had reason to believe that my readers participated in 'this feeling too. Hence, being pledged to some inter- 'ruptions and some pursuit of the original design, I set 'cheerfully about disentangling myself from those impedi- 'ments as fast as I could; and, this done, from that time 'until its completion *The Old Curiosity Shop* was written 'and published from week to week, in weekly parts.'

To be limited to one story.

He had very early himself become greatly taken with it. 'I am very glad indeed,' he wrote to me after the first half-dozen chapters, 'that you think so well of the '*Curiosity Shop*, and especially that what may be got 'out of Dick strikes you. I *mean* to make much of 'him. I feel the story extremely myself, which I take 'to be a good sign; and am already warmly interested 'in it. I shall run it on now for four whole numbers 'together, to give it a fair chance.' Every step lightened the road as it became more and more real with each character that appeared in it, and I still recall the glee with which he told me what he intended to do not only with Dick Swiveller, but with Septimus Brass, changed afterwards to Sampson. Undoubtedly, however, Dick was his favourite. 'Dick's behaviour in the matter 'of Miss Wackles will, I hope, give you satisfaction,' is the remark of another of his letters. 'I cannot yet discover 'that his aunt has any belief in him, or is in the least 'degree likely to send him a remittance, so that he will 'probably continue to be the sport of destiny.' His difficulties were the quickly recurring times of publication, the confined space in each number that yet had to contribute its individual effect, and (from the suddenness with

Dick Swiveller.

Disadvantages of weekly publication.

which he had begun) the impossibility of getting in advance. 'I was obliged to cramp most dreadfully what 'I thought a pretty idea in the last chapter. I hadn't 'room to turn': to this or a similar effect his complaints are frequent, and of the vexations named it was by far the worst. But he steadily bore up against all, and made a triumph of the little story. LONDON: 1840.

To help his work he went twice to Broadstairs, in June and in September. From this he wrote to me (17th June): 'It's now four o'clock and I have been at work since half-'past eight. I have really dried myself up into a condi-'tion which would almost justify me in pitching off the 'cliff, head first—but I must get richer before I indulge in 'a crowning luxury. Number 15, which I began to-day, I 'anticipate great things from. There is a description of 'getting gradually out of town, and passing through 'neighbourhoods of distinct and various characters, with 'which, if I had read it as anybody else's writing, I think 'I should have been very much struck. The child and 'the old man are on their journey of course, and the 'subject is a very pretty one.' Between these two Broadstairs visits he wrote to me: 'I intended calling on you 'this morning on my way back from Bevis-marks, whither 'I went to look at a house for Sampson Brass. But I got 'mingled up in a kind of social paste with the jews of 'Houndsditch, and roamed about among them till I came 'out in Moorfields, quite unexpectedly. So I got into a 'cab, and came home again, very tired, by way of the 'city-road.' At the opening of September he was again at Broadstairs. The residence he most desired there, BROADSTAIRS: 17th June. The old man's flight from London. In Bevis-marks.

BROADSTAIRS: 1840.

Fort-house, stood prominently at the top of a breezy hill on the road to Kingsgate, with a corn-field between it and the sea, and this in many subsequent years he always occupied; but he was fain to be content, as yet, with Lawn-house, a smaller villa between the hill and the corn-field, from which he now wrote of his attentions to Mr. Sampson Brass's sister. 'I have been at work of 'course' (2nd September) 'and have just finished a 'number. I have effected a reform by virtue of which 'we breakfast at a quarter before eight, so that I get 'to work at half-past, and am commonly free by one o'clock or so, which is a great happiness. Dick is now 'Sampson's' clerk, and I have touched Miss Brass in 'Number 25, lightly, but effectively I hope.'

Lawn-house.

Sally Brass.

At this point it became necessary to close the first volume of the *Clock*, which was issued accordingly with a dedication to Rogers, and a preface to which allusion will be made hereafter. 'I have opened the second volume,' he wrote to me on the 9th of September, 'with Kit; and I saw 'this morning looking out at the sea, as if a veil had been 'lifted up, an affecting thing that I can do with him bye 'and bye. Nous verrons.' 'I am glad you like that Kit 'number,' he wrote twelve days later, 'I thought you 'would. I have altered that about the opera-going. Of 'course I had no intention to delude the many-headed 'into a false belief concerning opera nights, but merely to 'specify a class of senators. I needn't have done it, how-'ever, for God knows they're pretty well all alike.' This referred to an objection made by me to something he had written of 'opera-going senators on Wednesday nights;'

Chapter 38.

Changes in proofs.

and, of another change made in compliance with some other objection of mine, he wrote on the 4th of October: 'You will receive the proof herewith. I have altered it. 'You must let it stand now. I really think the dead 'mankind a million fathoms deep, the best thing in 'the sentence. I have a notion of the dreadful silence 'down there, and of the stars shining down upon their 'drowned eyes—the fruit, let me tell you, of a solitary 'walk by starlight on the cliffs. As to the child-image 'I have made a note of it for alteration. In number 'thirty there will be some cutting needed, I think. I 'have, however, something in my eye near the beginning 'which I can easily take out. You will recognize a descrip- 'tion of the road we travelled between Birmingham and 'Wolverhampton: but I had conceived it so well in my 'mind that the execution doesn't please me quite as well 'as I expected. I shall be curious to know whether you 'think there's anything in the notion of the man and his 'furnace-fire. It would have been a good thing to have 'opened a new story with, I have been thinking since.'

BROADSTAIRS: 1840. Chapter 42. Chapters 43-45.

In the middle of October he returned to town, and by the end of the month he had so far advanced that the close of the story began to be not far distant. 'Tell me 'what you think,' he had written just before his return, 'of 36 and 37? The way is clear for Kit now, and for 'a great effect at the last with the Marchioness.' The last allusion I could not in the least understand, until I found, in the numbers just sent me, those exquisite chapters of the tale, the 57th and 58th, in which Dick Swiveller realizes his threat to Miss Wackles, discovers the small

LONDON. Dick and the Marchioness.

LONDON: 1840.

creature that his destiny is expressly saving up for him, dubs her Marchioness, and teaches her the delights of hot purl and cribbage. This is comedy of the purest kind; its great charm being the good-hearted fellow's kindness to the poor desolate child hiding itself under cover of what seems only mirth and fun. Altogether, and because of rather than in spite of his weaknesses, Dick is a captivating person. His gaiety and good humour survive such accumulations of 'staggerers,' he makes such discoveries of the 'rosy' in the very smallest of drinks, and becomes himself by his solacements of verse such a 'perpetual grand 'Apollo,' that his failings are all forgiven; and hearts resolutely shut against victims of destiny in general, open themselves freely to Dick Swiveller.

Masterpiece of kindly fun.

At the opening of November, there seems to have been a wish on Maclise's part to try his hand at an illustration for the story; but I do not remember that it bore other fruit than a very pleasant day at Jack Straw's-castle, where Dickens read one of the later numbers to us. 'Maclise and myself (alone in the carriage),' he wrote, 'will be with you at two exactly. We propose driving 'out to Hampstead and walking there, if it don't rain in 'buckets'-full. I shan't send Bradburys' the MS. of next 'number till to-morrow, for it contains the shadow of the 'number after that, and I want to read it to Mac, as, if 'he likes the subject, it will furnish him with one, I think. 'You can't imagine (gravely I write and speak) how 'exhausted I am to-day with yesterday's labours. I went 'to bed last night utterly dispirited and done up. All 'night I have been pursued by the child'; and this morn-

C. D. to J. F.

Closing of the tale.

'ing I am unrefreshed and miserable. I don't know what 'to do with myself. . . I think the close of the story will 'be great.' Connected with the same design on Maclise's part there was another reading, this time at my house, and of the number shadowed forth by what had been read at Hampstead. 'I will bring the MS,' he writes on the 12th of November, 'and, for Mac's information if needful, the 'number before it. I have only this moment put the 'finishing touch to it. The difficulty has been tremendous '—the anguish unspeakable. I didn't say six. Therefore 'dine at half-past five like a Christian. I shall bring Mac 'at that hour.'

London : 1840.

Effect upon the writer.

He had sent me, shortly before, the chapters in which the Marchioness nurses Dick in his fever, and puts his favourite philosophy to the hard test of asking him whether he has ever put pieces of orange-peel into cold water and made believe it was wine. 'If you make believe very much it's 'quite nice; but if you don't, you know, it hasn't much 'flavour:" so it stood originally, and to the latter word in the little creature's mouth I seem to have objected. Replying (on the 16th of December) he writes: '"If you '"make believe very much it's quite nice; but if you don't, '"you know, it seems as if it would bear a little more '"seasoning, certainly." I think that's better. Flavour is a 'common word in cookery, and among cooks, and so I 'used it. The part you cut out in the other number, 'which was sent me this morning, I had put in with a 'view to Quilp's last appearance on any stage, which is 'casting its shadow upon my mind; but it will come well 'enough without such a preparation, so I made no change.

C. D. to J. F.

Making-believe very much.

LONDON: 1840.

C. D. to J. F. The end approaching.

'I mean to shirk Sir Robert Inglis, and work to-night. I 'have been solemnly revolving the general story all this 'morning. The forty-fifth number will certainly close. 'Perhaps this forty-first which I am now at work on, had 'better contain the announcement of *Barnaby?* I am 'glad you like Dick and the Marchioness in that sixty-'fourth chapter—I thought you would.'

Fast shortening as the life of little Nell was now, the dying year might have seen it pass away; but I never knew him wind up any tale with such a sorrowful reluctance as this. He caught at any excuse to hold his hand from it, and stretched to the utmost limit the time left to complete it in. Christmas interposed its delays too, so that twelfth-night had come and gone when I wrote to him in the belief that he was nearly done. 'Done!' he wrote back to me on Friday the 7th, 'Done!!! Why 'bless you, I shall not be done till Wednesday night. I 'only began yesterday, and this part of the story is not to 'be galloped over, I can tell you. I think it will come 'famously—but I am the wretchedest of the wretched. 'It casts the most horrible shadow upon me, and it is as 'much as I can do to keep moving at all. I tremble to 'approach the place a great deal more than Kit; a great 'deal more than Mr. Garland; a great deal more than 'the Single Gentleman. I shan't recover it for a long 'time. Nobody will miss her like I shall. It is such a 'very painful thing to me, that I really cannot express 'my sorrow. Old wounds bleed afresh when I only think 'of the way of doing it: what the actual doing it will be, 'God knows. I can't preach to myself the schoolmaster's

C. D. to J. F. 7th Jan. 1841.

Death of Little Nell.

'consolation, though I try. Dear Mary died yesterday, LONDON: 1841.
'when I think of this sad story. I don't know what to say
'about dining to-morrow—perhaps you'll send up to- A personal sorrow.
'morrow morning for news? That'll be the best way. I
'have refused several invitations for this week and next,
'determining to go nowhere till I had done. I am afraid
'of disturbing the state I have been trying to get into,
'and having to fetch it all back again.' He had finished, all but the last chapter, on the Wednesday named; that was the 12th of January; and on the following night he read to me the two chapters of Nell's death, the 71st and 72nd, with the result described in a letter to me of the following Monday, the 17th January 1841.

'I can't help letting you know how much your C. D. to J. F. 17th Jan.
'yesterday's letter pleased me. I felt sure you liked
'the chapters when we read them on Thursday night, but
'it was a great delight to have my impression so strongly
'and heartily confirmed. You know how little value I
'should set on what I had done, if all the world cried out
'that it was good, and those whose good opinion and
'approbation I value most were silent. The assurance
'that this little closing of the scene touches and is felt by
'you so strongly, is better to me than a thousand most
'sweet voices out of doors, When I first began, *on your*
'*valued suggestion*, to keep my thoughts upon this ending
'of the tale, I resolved to try and do something which
'might be read by people about whom Death had been,
'with a softened feeling, and with consolation... After you
'left last night, I took my desk upstairs; and writing The end. 17 Jan. 4 a.m.
'until four o'clock this morning, finished the old story. It

LONDON: 1841.

'makes me very melancholy to think that all these people 'are lost to me for ever, and I feel as if I never could 'become attached to any new set of characters.' The words printed in italics, as underlined by himself, give me my share in the story which had gone so closely to his heart. I was responsible for its tragic ending. He had not thought of killing her, when, about half way through, I asked him to consider whether it did not necessarily belong even to his own conception, after taking so mere a child through such a tragedy of sorrow, to lift her also out of the commonplace of ordinary happy endings, so that the gentle pure little figure and form should never change to the fancy. All that I meant he seized at once, and never turned aside from it again.

A suggestion adopted by him.

Success of the story.

The published book was an extraordinary success, and, in America more especially, very greatly increased the writer's fame. The pathetic vein it had opened was perhaps mainly the cause of this, but opinion at home continued still to turn on the old characteristics; the freshness of humour of which the pathos was but another form and product, the grasp of reality with which character had again been seized, the discernment of good under its least attractive forms and of evil in its most captivating disguises, the cordial wisdom and sound heart, the enjoyment and fun, luxuriant yet under proper control. No falling-off was found in these, and I doubt if any of his people have been more widely liked than Dick Swiveller and the Marchioness. The characters generally indeed work out their share in the purpose of the tale; the extravagances of some of them help to intensify its meaning; and the

Its characteristics.

sayings and doings of the worst and the best alike have their point and applicability. Many an over-suspicious person will find advantage in remembering what a too liberal application of Foxey's principle of suspecting everybody brought Mr. Sampson Brass to; and many an overhasty judgment of poor human nature will unconsciously be checked, when it is remembered that Mr. Christopher Nubbles *did* come back to work out that shilling.

LONDON: 1841.

Useful lessons.

But the main idea and chief figure of the piece constitute its interest for most people, and give it rank upon the whole with the most attractive productions of English fiction. I am not acquainted with any story in the language more adapted to strengthen in the heart what most needs help and encouragement, to sustain kindly and innocent impulses, and to awaken everywhere the sleeping germs of good. It includes necessarily much pain, much uninterrupted sadness; and yet the brightness and sunshine quite overtop the gloom. The humour is so benevolent; the view of errors that have no depravity of heart in them is so indulgent; the quiet courage under calamity, the purity that nothing impure can soil, are so full of tender teaching. Its effect as a mere piece of art, too, considering the circumstances in which I have shown it to be written, I think very noteworthy. It began with a plan for but a short half dozen chapters; it grew into a full-proportioned story under the warmth of the feeling it had inspired its writer with; its very incidents created a necessity at first not seen; and it was carried to a close only contemplated after a full half of it had been written.

The child-heroine.

Constructed bit by bit.

LONDON: 1841.

Yet, from the opening of the tale to that undesigned ending; from the image of little Nell asleep amid the quaint grotesque figures of the old curiosity warehouse, to that other final sleep she takes among the grim forms and carvings of the old church aisle; the main purpose seems to be always present. The characters and incidents that at first appear most foreign to it, are found to have had with it a close relation. The hideous lumber and rottenness that surround the child in her grandfather's home, take shape again in Quilp and his filthy gang. In the first still picture of Nell's innocence in the midst of strange and alien forms, we have the forecast of her after-wanderings, her patient miseries, her sad maturity of experience before its time. Without the show-people and their blended fictions and realities, their waxworks, dwarfs, giants, and performing dogs, the picture would have wanted some part of its significance. Nor could the genius of Hogarth himself have given it higher expression than in the scenes by the cottage door, the furnace fire, and the burial place of the old church, over whose tombs and gravestones hang the puppets of Mr. Punch's show while the exhibitors are mending and repairing them. And when, at last, Nell sits within the quiet old church where all her wanderings end, and gazes on those silent monumental groups of warriors; helmets, swords, and gauntlets wasting away around them; the associations among which her life had opened seem to have come crowding on the scene again, to be present at its close. But, stripped of their strangeness; deepened into solemn shapes by the suffering she has undergone; gently fusing every feeling of a life past

Harmony of effect.

Fitness of means.

Hogarthian.

Beginning and end.

into hopeful and familiar anticipation of a life to come; and already imperceptibly lifting her, without grief or pain, from the earth she loves, yet whose grosser paths her light steps only touched to show the track through them to Heaven. This is genuine art, and such as all cannot fail to recognize who read the book in a right sympathy with the conception that pervades it. Nor, great as the discomfort was of reading it in brief weekly snatches, can I be wholly certain that the discomfort of so writing it involved nothing but disadvantage. With so much in every portion to do, and so little space to do it in, the opportunities to a writer for mere self-indulgence were necessarily rare. LONDON: 1841.

Of the innumerable tributes the story has received, and to none other by Dickens have more or more various been paid, there is one, the very last, which has much affected me. Not many months before my friend's death, he had sent me two *Overland Monthlies* containing two sketches by a young American writer far away in California, 'The Luck of Roaring Camp,' and 'The Outcasts of 'Poker Flat,' in which he had found such subtle strokes of character as he had not anywhere else in late years discovered; the manner resembling himself, but the matter fresh to a degree that had surprised him; the painting in all respects masterly, and the wild rude thing painted a quite wonderful reality. I have rarely known him more honestly moved. A few months passed; telegraph wires flashed over the world that he had passed away on the 9th of June; and the young writer of whom he had then written to me, all unconscious of that praise, A recent tribute. Sketches sent me by Dickens in 1869:

LONDON: 1841.

put his tribute of gratefulness and sorrow into the form of a poem called *Dickens in Camp*.* It embodies the same kind of incident which had so affected the master himself, in the papers to which I have referred; it shows the gentler influences, which, in even those Californian wilds, can restore outlawed 'roaring camps' to silence and humanity; and there is hardly any form of posthumous tribute which I can imagine likely to have better satisfied his desire of fame, than one which should thus connect, with the special favourite among all his heroines, the restraints and authority exerted by his genius over the rudest and least civilized of competitors in that far fierce race for wealth.

Verses by the same writer in June 1870.

'Dickens in Camp.'

Above the pines the moon was slowly drifting,
The river sang below;
The dim Sierras, far beyond, uplifting
Their minarets of snow:

The roaring camp-fire, with rude humour, painted
The ruddy tints of health
On haggard face and form that drooped and fainted
In the fierce race for wealth;

Till one arose, and from his pack's scant treasure
A hoarded volume drew,
And cards were dropped from hands of listless leisure
To hear the tale anew;

And then, while round them shadows gathered faster,
And as the fire-light fell,
He read aloud the book wherein the Master
Had writ of "Little Nell:"

* *Poems*. By Bret Harte (Boston: Osgood & Co. 1871), pp. 32–5.

'Dickens in Camp.'

Perhaps 'twas boyish fancy,—for the reader
Was youngest of them all,—
But, as he read, from clustering pine and cedar
A silence seemed to fall;

The fir-trees, gathering closer in the shadows,
Listened in every spray,
While the whole camp, with "Nell" on English meadows,
Wandered and lost their way:

And so in mountain solitudes—o'ertaken
As by some spell divine—
Their cares dropped from them like the needles shaken
From out the gusty pine.

Lost is that camp, and wasted all its fire;
And he who wrought that spell?—
Ah, towering pine and stately Kentish spire,
Ye have one tale to tell!

Lost is that camp! but let its fragrant story
Blend with the breath that thrills
With hop-vines' incense all the pensive glory
That fills the Kentish hills.

And on that grave where English oak and holly
And laurel wreaths entwine,
Deem it not all a too presumptuous folly,—
This spray of Western pine.

July, 1870.

CHAPTER XIII.

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE AND BROADSTAIRS.

1840.

LONDON: 1840.

A good saying.

IT was an excellent saying of the first Lord Shaftesbury, that, seeing every man of any capacity holds within himself two men, the wise and the foolish, each of them ought freely to be allowed his turn; and it was one of the secrets of Dickens's social charm that he could, in strict accordance with this saying, allow each part of him its turn: could afford thoroughly to give rest and relief to what was serious in him; and, when the time came to play his gambols, could surrender himself wholly to the enjoyment of the time, and become the very genius and embodiment of one of his own most whimsical fancies.

Turning back from the narrative of his last piece of writing to recall a few occurrences of the year during which it had occupied him, I find him at its opening in one of these humorous moods, and another friend, with myself, enslaved by its influence. 'What on earth does it 'all mean,' wrote poor puzzled Mr. Landor to me, enclosing a letter from him of the date of the 11th of February, the day after the royal nuptials of that year. In this he had related to our old friend a wonderful hallucination arising

Landor mystified.

out of that event, which had then taken entire possession of him. 'Society is unhinged here,' thus ran the letter, 'by her majesty's marriage, and I am sorry to add that 'I have fallen hopelessly in love with the Queen, and 'wander up and down with vague and dismal thoughts 'of running away to some uninhabited island with a maid 'of honor, to be entrapped by conspiracy for that purpose. 'Can you suggest any particular young person, serving in 'such a capacity, who would suit me? It is too much per- 'haps to ask you to join the band of noble youths (Forster 'is in it, and Maclise) who are to assist me in this great 'enterprise, but a man of your energy would be invaluable. 'I have my eye upon Lady . . . , principally because she is 'very beautiful and has no strong brothers. Upon this, and 'other points of the scheme, however, we will confer more 'at large when we meet; and meanwhile burn this docu- 'ment, that no suspicion may arise or rumour get abroad.'

LONDON: 1840.

The mirthful side of Dickens.

A bold proposal.

The maid of honor and the uninhabited island were flights of fancy, but the other daring delusion was for a time encouraged to such whimsical lengths, not alone by him, but (under his influence) by the two friends named, that it took the wildest forms of humorous extravagance; and of the private confidences much interchanged, as well as of the style of open speech in which our joke of despairing unfitness for any further use or enjoyment of life was unflaggingly kept up, to the amazement of bystanders knowing nothing of what it meant, and believing we had half lost our senses, I permit myself to give from his letters one further illustration. 'I am utterly lost in misery,' he writes to me on the 12th of February, 'and can do nothing.

Extravagant flights.

LONDON : 1840.

C. D. to J. F.

'I have been reading *Oliver*, *Pickwick*, and *Nickleby* to get 'my thoughts together for the new effort, but all in vain:

'My heart is at Windsor,
'My heart isn't here;
'My heart is at Windsor,
'A following my dear.

Despairing thoughts.

'I saw the Responsibilities this morning, and burst into 'tears. The presence of my wife aggravates me. I loathe 'my parents. I detest my house. I begin to have thoughts 'of the Serpentine, of the regent's-canal, of the razors 'upstairs, of the chemist's down the street, of poisoning 'myself at Mrs. ——'s table, of hanging myself upon the 'pear-tree in the garden, of abstaining from food and 'starving myself to death, of being bled for my cold and 'tearing off the bandage, of falling under the feet of cab-'horses in the New-road, of murdering Chapman and Hall 'and becoming great in story (SHE must hear something of 'me then—perhaps sign the warrant: or is that a fable?), 'of turning Chartist, of heading some bloody assault upon 'the palace and saving Her by my single hand——of being 'anything but what I have been, and doing anything but 'what I have done. Your distracted friend, C. D.' The wild derangement of asterisks in every shape and form, with which this incoherence closed, cannot here be given.

Riding exercise.

Some ailments which dated from an earlier period in his life made themselves felt in the spring of the year, as I remember, and increased horse exercise was strongly recommended to him. 'I find it will be positively necessary 'to go, for five days in the week at least,' he wrote to me in March, 'on a perfect regimen of diet and exercise, and

'am anxious therefore not to delay treating for a horse.' We were now in consequence, when he was not at the sea-side, much on horseback in suburban lanes and roads; and the spacious garden of his new house was also turned to healthful use at even his busiest times of work. I mark this, too, as the time when the first of his ravens took up residence there; and as the beginning of disputes with two of his neighbours about the smoking of the stable-chimney, which his groom Topping, a highly absurd little man with flaming red hair, so complicated by secret devices of his own, meant to conciliate each complainant alternately and having the effect of aggravating both, that law proceedings were only barely avoided. 'I shall 'give you,' he writes, 'my latest report of the chimney 'in the form of an address from Topping, made to me 'on our way from little Hall's at Norwood the other 'night, where he and Chapman and I had been walking 'all day, while Topping drove Kate, Mrs. Hall, and her 'sisters, to Dulwich. Topping had been regaled upon 'the premises, and was just drunk enough to be con-'fidential. "Beggin' your pardon, sir, but the genelman '"next door sir, seems to be gettin' quite comfortable and '"pleasant about the chim'ley."—"I don't think he is, '"Topping."—"Yes he is sir I think. He comes out in '"the yard this morning and says, *Coachman* he says" '(observe the vision of a great large fat man called up by 'the word) "*is that your raven* he says, *Coachman? or* '"*is it Mr. Dickens's raven?* he says. My master's sir, '"I says. *Well*, he says, *It's a fine bird. I think the* '"*chimley 'ill do now Coachman,—now the jint's taken*

LONDON: 1840.

Grip: the first of his ravens.

Groom Topping.

C. D. to J. F.

LONDON: 1840.

The smoky chimneys.

'"*off the pipe* he says. I hope it will sir, I says; my '"master's a genelman as wouldn't annoy no genelman if '"he could help it, I'm sure; and my missis is so afraid '"of havin' a bit o' fire that o' Sundays our little bit o' '"weal or wot not, goes to the baker's a purpose.—'"*Damn the chimley, Coachman,* he says, *it's a smokin'* '"*now.*—It a'nt a smokin your way sir, I says; *Well* he '"says *no more it is, Coachman, and as long as it smokes* '"*anybody else's way, it's all right and I'm agreeable.*" 'Of course I shall now have the man from the other side 'upon me, and very likely with an action of nuisance for 'smoking into his conservatory.'

A graver incident, which occurred to him also among his earliest experiences as tenant of Devonshire-terrace, illustrates too well the always practical turn of his kindness and humanity not to deserve relation here. He has himself described it, in one of his minor writings, in setting down what he remembered as the only good that ever came of a beadle. Of that great parish functionary, he says, 'having newly taken the lease of a house in a 'certain distinguished metropolitan parish, a house which 'then appeared to me to be a frightfully first-class family 'mansion involving awful responsibilities, I became the 'prey.' In other words he was summoned, and obliged to sit, as juryman at an inquest on the body of a little child alleged to have been murdered by its mother; of which the result was, that, by his persevering exertion, seconded by the humane help of the coroner, Mr. Wakley, the verdict of himself and his fellow-jurymen charged her only with concealment of the birth. 'The poor desolate

Juryman at an inquest.

'creature dropped upon her knees before us with protesta- LONDON: 1840.
'tions that we were right (protestations among the most
'affecting that I have ever heard in my life), and was
'carried away insensible. I caused some extra care to Practical humanity.
'be taken of her in the prison, and counsel to be retained
'for her defence when she was tried at the Old Bailey;
'and her sentence was lenient, and her history and
'conduct proved that it was right.' How much he felt the little incident, at the actual time of its occurrence, may be judged from the few lines written to me next morning: 'Whether it was the poor baby, or its poor mother, or the 'coffin, or my fellow-jurymen, or what not, I can't say, but 'last night I had a most violent attack of sickness and 'indigestion which not only prevented me from sleeping, 'but even from lying down. Accordingly Kate and I sat 'up through the dreary watches.'

The day of the first publication of *Master Humphrey* BIRMINGHAM. Publication of the *Clock's* first number.
(Saturday, 4th April) had by this time come, and, according to the rule observed in his two other great ventures, he left town with Mrs. Dickens on Friday the 3rd. With Maclise we had been together at Richmond the previous night; and I joined him at Birmingham the day following with news of the sale of the whole sixty thousand copies to which the first working had been limited, and of orders already in hand for ten thousand more! The excitement of the success somewhat lengthened our holiday; A holiday. and, after visiting Shakespeare's house at Stratford and Johnson's at Lichfield, we found our resources so straitened in returning, that, employing as our messenger of need his younger brother Alfred, who had joined us

BROADSTAIRS: 1840.

from Tamworth where he was a student-engineer, we had to pawn our gold watches at Birmingham.

Transfer of *Barnaby Rudge* settled.

At the end of the following month he went to Broadstairs, and not many days before (on the 20th of May) a note from Mr. Jerdan on behalf of Mr. Bentley opened the negotiations formerly referred to,* which transferred to Messrs. Chapman and Hall the agreement for *Barnaby Rudge*. I was myself absent when he left, and in a letter announcing his departure he had written: 'I don't know of a word of 'news in all London, but there will be plenty next week, 'for I am going away, and I hope you'll send me an 'account of it. I am doubtful whether it will be a murder, 'a fire, a vast robbery, or the escape of Gould, but it will 'be something remarkable no doubt. I almost blame 'myself for the death of that poor girl who leaped off the 'monument upon my leaving town last year. She would 'not have done it if I had remained, neither would the two 'men have found the skeleton in the sewers.' His prediction was quite accurate, for I had to tell him, after not many days, of the potboy who shot at the queen. 'It's 'a great pity,' he replied very sensibly, 'they couldn't 'suffocate that boy, Master Oxford, and say no more about 'it. To have put him quietly between two feather-beds 'would have stopped his heroic speeches, and dulled the 'sound of his glory very much. As it is, she will have 'to run the gauntlet of many a fool and madman, some of 'whom may perchance be better shots and use other than 'Brummagem firearms.' How much of this actually came to pass, the reader knows.

C. D. to J. F.

The potboy traitor.

A true prediction.

* See *ante*, p. 141.

From the letters of his present Broadstairs visit, there is little further to add to their account of his progress with his story; but a couple more lines may be given for their characteristic expression of his invariable habit upon entering any new abode, whether to stay in it for days or for years. On a Monday night he arrived, and on the Tuesday (2nd of June) wrote to me: 'Before I 'tasted bit or drop yesterday, I set out my writing-table 'with extreme taste and neatness, and improved the 'disposition of the furniture generally.' He stayed till the end of June; when Maclise and myself joined him for the pleasure of posting back home with him and Mrs. Dickens, by way of his favourite Chatham and Rochester and Cobham, where we passed two agreeable days in revisiting well-remembered scenes. I had meanwhile brought to a close the treaty for repurchase of *Oliver* and surrender of *Barnaby*, upon terms which are succinctly stated in a letter written by him to Messrs. Chapman and Hall on the 2nd of July, the day after our return.

LONDON: 1840.

Habits of order.

Revisiting old scenes.

'The terms upon which you advance the money to-day 'for the purchase of the copyright and stock* of *Oliver* on 'my behalf, are understood between us to be these. That 'this 2250*l.* is to be deducted from the purchase-money 'of a work by me entitled *Barnaby Rudge*, of which two 'chapters are now in your hands, and of which the whole

C. D. to Chapman and Hall.

* By way of a novelty to help off the stock he had suggested (17th June): 'Would it not be best to print new title-pages to the copies in sheets and 'publish them as a new edition, with an interesting Preface? I am talking 'about all this as though the treaty were concluded, but I hope and trust 'that in effect it is, for negotiation and delay are worse to me than drawn 'daggers.' See my remark *ante*, p. 102.

LONDON: 1840.

'is to be written within some convenient time to be 'agreed upon between us. But if it should not be written '(which God forbid!) within five years, you are to have a 'lien to this amount on the property belonging to me that 'is now in your hands, namely, my shares in the stock 'and copyright of *Sketches by Boz*, *The Pickwick Papers*, '*Nicholas Nickleby*, *Oliver Twist*, and *Master Humphrey's* '*Clock*; in which we do not include any share of the 'current profits of the last-named work, which I shall 'remain at liberty to draw at the times stated in our 'agreement. Your purchase of *Barnaby Rudge* is made 'upon the following terms. It is to consist of matter 'sufficient for ten monthly numbers of the size of *Pick-* '*wick* and *Nickleby*, which you are however at liberty to 'divide and publish in fifteen smaller numbers if you 'think fit. The terms for the purchase of this edition in 'numbers, and for the copyright of the whole book for six 'months after the publication of the last number, are '3000*l*. At the expiration of the six months the whole 'copyright reverts to me.' The sequel was, as all the world knows, that Barnaby became successor to little Nell, the money being repaid by the profits of the *Clock*; but I ought to mention also the more generous sequel that my own small service had, on my receiving from him, after not many days, an antique silver-mounted jug of great beauty of form and workmanship, but with a wealth far beyond jeweller's chasing or artist's design in the written words that accompanied it.* I accepted them

Terms of sale of *Barnaby*.

A gift.

* 'Accept from me' (July 8th, 1840), 'as a slight memorial of your 'attached companion, the poor keepsake which accompanies this. My

to commemorate, not the help they would have far overpaid, but the gladness of his own escape from the last of the agreements that had hampered the opening of his career, and the better future that was now before him.

BROADSTAIRS: 1840.

Escape from bondage.

At the opening of August he was with Mrs. Dickens for some days in Devonshire, on a visit to his father, but he had to take his work with him; and, as he wrote to me, they had only one real holiday, when Dawlish, Teignmouth, Babbicombe, and Torquay were explored, returning to Exeter at night. In the beginning of September he was again at Broadstairs.

'I was just going to work,' he wrote on the 9th, 'when 'I got this letter, and the story of the man who went to 'Chapman and Hall's knocked me down flat. I wrote 'until now (a quarter to one) against the grain, and have 'at last given it up for one day. Upon my word it IS 'intolerable. I have been grinding my teeth all the 'morning. I think I could say in two lines something 'about the general report with propriety. I'll add them 'to the proof' (the preface to the first volume of the *Clock* was at this time in preparation), 'giving you full power

C. D. to J. F.

Published libels about him.

'heart is not an eloquent one on matters which touch it most, but suppose 'this claret jug the urn in which it lies, and believe that its warmest and 'truest blood is yours. This was the object of my fruitless search, and your 'curiosity, on Friday. At first I scarcely knew what trifle (you will deem it 'valuable, I know, for the giver's sake) to send you; but I thought it would 'be pleasant to connect it with our jovial moments, and to let it add, to the 'wine we shall drink from it together, a flavor which the choicest vintage 'could never impart. Take it from my hand—filled to the brim and running 'over with truth and earnestness. I have just taken one parting look at it, 'and it seems the most elegant thing in the world to me, for I lose sight of 'the vase in the crowd of welcome associations that are clustering and 'wreathing themselves about it.'

C. D. to J. F.

BROADSTAIRS: 1840.

'to cut them out if you should think differently from 'me, and from C and H, who in such a matter must be 'admitted judges.' He refers here to a report, rather extensively circulated at the time, and which through various channels had reached his publishers, that he was suffering from loss of reason and was under treatment in an asylum.* I would have withheld from him the mention of it, as an absurdity that must quickly pass away—but against my wish it had been communicated to him, and I had difficulty in keeping within judicious bounds his extreme and very natural wrath.

Stated to be insane.

Other similar reports.

A few days later (the 15th) he wrote: 'I have been rather 'surprised of late to have applications from roman-catholic 'clergymen, demanding (rather pastorally, and with a kind 'of grave authority) assistance, literary employment, and 'so forth. At length it struck me, that, through some 'channel or other, I must have been represented as 'belonging to that religion. Would you believe, that in 'a letter from Lamert at Cork, to my mother, which I saw 'last night, he says "What do the papers mean by saying '"that Charles is demented, and further, *that he has* '"*turned roman-catholic?*"—!' Of the begging-letter-

* Already he had been the subject of similar reports on the occasion of the family sorrow which compelled him to suspend the publication of *Pickwick* for two months (*ante*, p. 98), when, upon issuing a brief address in resuming his work (30th June, 1837), he said: 'By one set of intimate 'acquaintances, especially well-informed, he has been killed outright; by 'another, driven mad; by a third, imprisoned for debt; by a fourth, sent 'per steamer to the United-States; by a fifth, rendered incapable of mental 'exertion for evermore; by all, in short, represented as doing anything but 'seeking in a few weeks' retirement the restoration of that cheerfulness and 'peace of which a sad bereavement had temporarily deprived him.'

C. D. *loq.*

writers, hinted at here, I ought earlier to have said something. In one of his detached essays he has described, without a particle of exaggeration, the extent to which he was made a victim by this class of swindler, and the extravagance of the devices practised on him; but he has not confessed, as he might, that for much of what he suffered he was himself responsible, by giving so largely, as at first he did, to almost every one who applied to him. What at last brought him to his senses in this respect, I think, was the request made by the adventurer who had exhausted every other expedient, and who desired finally, after describing himself reduced to the condition of a travelling Cheap Jack in the smallest way of crockery, that a donkey might be left out for him next day, which he would duly call for. This I perfectly remember, and I much fear that the applicant was the Daniel Tobin before mentioned.*

BROADSTAIRS: 1840.

Begging-letter-writers.

A donkey asked for.

Many and delightful were other letters written from Broadstairs at this date, filled with whimsical talk and humorous description relating chiefly to an eccentric friend who stayed with him most of the time, and is sketched in one of his published papers as Mr. Kindheart; but all too private for reproduction now. He returned in the middle of October, when we resumed our almost daily ridings, foregatherings with Maclise at Hampstead and elsewhere, and social entertainments with Macready, Talfourd, Procter, Stanfield, Forblanque, Elliotson, Tennent, d'Orsay, Quin, Harness, Wilkie, Edwin Landseer, Rogers, Sydney Smith, and Bulwer. Of the genius of the author

Mr. Kindheart.

* See *ante*, p. 60-1.

LONDON: 1841.

Friendly meetings.

of *Pelham* and *Eugene Aram* he had, early and late, the highest admiration, and he took occasion to express it during the present year in a new preface which he published to *Oliver Twist*. Other friends became familiar in later years; but, disinclined as he was to the dinner invitations that reached him from every quarter, all such meetings with those whom I have named, and in an especial manner the marked attentions shown him by Miss Coutts which began with the very beginning of his career, were invariably welcome.

Social talk.

To speak here of the pleasure his society afforded, would anticipate the fitter mention to be made hereafter. But what in this respect distinguishes nearly all original men, he possessed eminently. His place was not to be filled up by any other. To the most trivial talk he gave the attraction of his own character. It might be a small matter; something he had read or observed during the day, some quaint odd fancy from a book, a vivid little outdoor picture, the laughing exposure of some imposture, or a burst of sheer mirthful enjoyment; but of its kind it would be something unique, because genuinely part of himself. This, and his unwearying animal spirits, made him the most delightful of companions; no claim on good-fellowship ever found him wanting; and no one so constantly recalled to his friends the description Johnson gave of Garrick, as the cheerfullest man of his age.

Of what occupied him in the way of literary labour in the autumn and winter months of the year, some description has been given; and, apart from what has already thus been said of his work at the closing chapters of *The Old*

Curiosity Shop, nothing now calls for more special allusion, except that in his town-walks in November, impelled thereto by specimens recently discovered in his country-walks between Broadstairs and Ramsgate, he thoroughly explored the ballad literature of Seven-dials, and took to singing himself, with an effect that justified his reputation for comic singing in his childhood, not a few of these wonderful productions. His last successful labour of the year was the reconciliation of two friends; and his motive, as well as the principle that guided him, as they are described by himself, I think worth preserving. For the first: 'In the midst of this child's death, I, over whom 'something of the bitterness of death has passed, not lightly 'perhaps, was reminded of many old kindnesses, and was 'sorry in my heart that men who really liked each other 'should waste life at arm's length.' For the last: 'I have 'laid it down as a rule in my judgment of men, to ob- 'serve narrowly whether some (of whom one is disposed to 'think badly) don't carry all their faults upon the surface, 'and others (of whom one is disposed to think well) don't 'carry many more beneath it. I have long ago made sure 'that our friend is in the first class; and when I know 'all the foibles a man has, with little trouble in the 'discovery, I begin to think he is worth liking.' His latest letter of the year, dated the day following, closed with the hope that we might, he and I, enjoy together 'fifty more Christmases, at least, in this world, and eternal 'summers in another.' Alas!

LONDON: 1841.

Ballads of Seven-dials.

Reconciling friends.

C. D. to J. F.

Hint for judging men.

CHAPTER XIV.

BARNABY RUDGE.

1841.

LONDON: 1841.

THE letters of 1841 yield similar fruit as to his doings and sayings, and may in like manner first be consulted for the literary work he had in hand.

He had the advantage of beginning *Barnaby Rudge* with a fair amount of story in advance, which he had only to make suitable, by occasional readjustment of chapters, to publication in weekly portions; and on this he was engaged before the end of January. 'I am at present' (22nd January, 1841) 'in what Leigh Hunt would call a kind 'of impossible state—thinking what on earth Master 'Humphrey can think of through four mortal pages. I 'added, here and there, to the last chapter of the *Curiosity* '*Shop* yesterday, and it leaves me only four pages to 'write.' (They were filled by a paper from Humphrey introductory of the new tale, in which will be found a striking picture of London, from midnight to the break of day.) 'I also made up, and wrote the needful insertions 'for, the second number of *Barnaby*—so that I came back to the mill a little.' Hardly yet: for after four days he writes, having meanwhile done nothing: 'I have been

C. D. to J. F.

Hard work.

'looking (three o'clock) with an appearance of extra- LONDON: 1841.
'ordinary interest and study at *one leaf* of the *Curiosities*
'*of Literature* ever since half-past ten this morning—I
'haven't the heart to turn over.' Then, on Friday the
29th, better news came. 'I didn't stir out yesterday, but
'sat and *thought* all day; not writing a line; not so much
'as the cross of a t or dot of an i. I imaged forth a good At work on *Barnaby*.
'deal of *Barnaby* by keeping my mind steadily upon him;
'and am happy to say I have gone to work this morning in
'good twig, strong hope, and cheerful spirits. Last night
'I was unutterably and impossible-to-form-an-idea-of-ably
'miserable.... By the bye don't engage yourself other-
'wise than to me, for Sunday week, because it's my birth-
'day. I have no doubt we shall have got over our
'troubles here by that time, and I purpose having a snug
'dinner in the study.' We had the dinner, though the
troubles were not over; but the next day another son was A fourth child and second son born: 8 Feb.
born to him. 'Thank God,' he wrote on the 9th, 'quite
'well. I am thinking hard, and have just written to
'Browne enquiring when he will come and confer about
'the raven.' He had by this time resolved to make that
bird, whose accomplishments had been daily ripening
and enlarging for the last twelve months to the increasing
mirth and delight of all of us, a prominent figure in *Bar-* The raven.
naby; and the invitation to the artist was for a conference
how best to introduce him graphically.

The next letter mentioning *Barnaby* was from Brighton
(25th February), whither he had flown for a week's quiet
labour. 'I have (it's four o'clock) done a very fair morn-
'ing's work, at which I have sat very close, and been

LONDON: 1841.

'blessed besides with a clear view of the end of the 'volume. As the contents of one number usually require 'a day's thought at the very least, and often more, this 'puts me in great spirits. I think—that is, I hope—the 'story takes a great stride at this point, and takes it 'WELL. Nous verrons. Grip will be strong, and I build 'greatly on the Varden household.'

A loss in the family.

Upon his return he had to lament a domestic calamity, which, for its connection with that famous personage in *Barnaby*, must be mentioned here. The raven had for some days been ailing, and Topping had reported of him, as Shakespeare of Hamlet, that he had lost his mirth and forgone all customary exercises: but Dickens paid no great heed, remembering his recovery from an illness of the previous summer when he swallowed some white paint; so that the graver report which led him to send for the doctor came upon him unexpectedly, and nothing but his own language can worthily describe the result. Unable from the state of his feelings to write two letters, he sent the narrative to Maclise, under an enormous black seal, for transmission to me; and thus it befell that this fortunate bird receives a double passport to fame, so great a humorist having celebrated his farewell to the present world, and so great a painter his welcome to another.

Death of the raven: 12 March.

'You will be greatly shocked' (the letter is dated Friday evening, March 12th, 1841) 'and grieved to hear 'that the Raven is no more. He expired to-day at a few 'minutes after twelve o'clock at noon. He had been 'ailing for a few days, but we anticipated no serious 'result, conjecturing that a portion of the white paint he

'swallowed last summer might be lingering about his 'vitals without having any serious effect upon his con- 'stitution. Yesterday afternoon he was taken so much 'worse that I sent an express for the medical gentleman '(Mr. Herring), who promptly attended, and administered 'a powerful dose of castor oil. Under the influence of 'this medicine, he recovered so far as to be able at eight 'o'clock p.m. to bite Topping. His night was peaceful. 'This morning at daybreak he appeared better; received '(agreeably to the doctor's directions) another dose of 'castor oil; and partook plentifully of some warm gruel, 'the flavor of which he appeared to relish. Towards 'eleven o'clock he was so much worse that it was found 'necessary to muffle the stable-knocker. At half-past, or 'thereabouts, he was heard talking to himself about the 'horse and Topping's family, and to add some incoherent 'expressions which are supposed to have been either a 'foreboding of his approaching dissolution, or some wishes 'relative to the disposal of his little property: consisting 'chiefly of half-pence which he had buried in different 'parts of the garden. On the clock striking twelve he 'appeared slightly agitated, but he soon recovered, walked 'twice or thrice along the coach-house, stopped to bark, 'staggered, exclaimed *Halloa old girl!* (his favourite 'expression), and died.

LONDON: 1841.

C. D. describes his illness.

Disposal of his property.

'He behaved throughout with a decent fortitude, 'equanimity, and self-possession, which cannot be too 'much admired. I deeply regret that being in ignor- 'ance of his danger I did not attend to receive his last 'instructions. Something remarkable about his eyes

LONDON: 1841.

'occasioned Topping to run for the doctor at twelve. 'When they returned together our friend was gone. It

The doctor sent for.

'was the medical gentleman who informed me of his 'decease. He did it with great caution and delicacy, 'preparing me by the remark that "a jolly queer start '"had taken place"; but the shock was very great not-

Suspicions.

'withstanding. I am not wholly free from suspicions of 'poison. A malicious butcher has been heard to say 'that he would "do" for him: his plea was that he 'would not be molested in taking orders down the mews, 'by any bird that wore a tail. Other persons have also 'been heard to threaten: among others, Charles Knight, 'who has just started a weekly publication price four-'pence: *Barnaby* being, as you know, threepence. I 'have directed a post-mortem examination, and the body 'has been removed to Mr. Herring's school of anatomy for 'that purpose.

'I could wish, if you can take the trouble, that you could 'inclose this to Forster immediately after you have read 'it. I cannot discharge the painful task of communication 'more than once. Were they ravens who took manna to 'somebody in the wilderness? At times I hope they

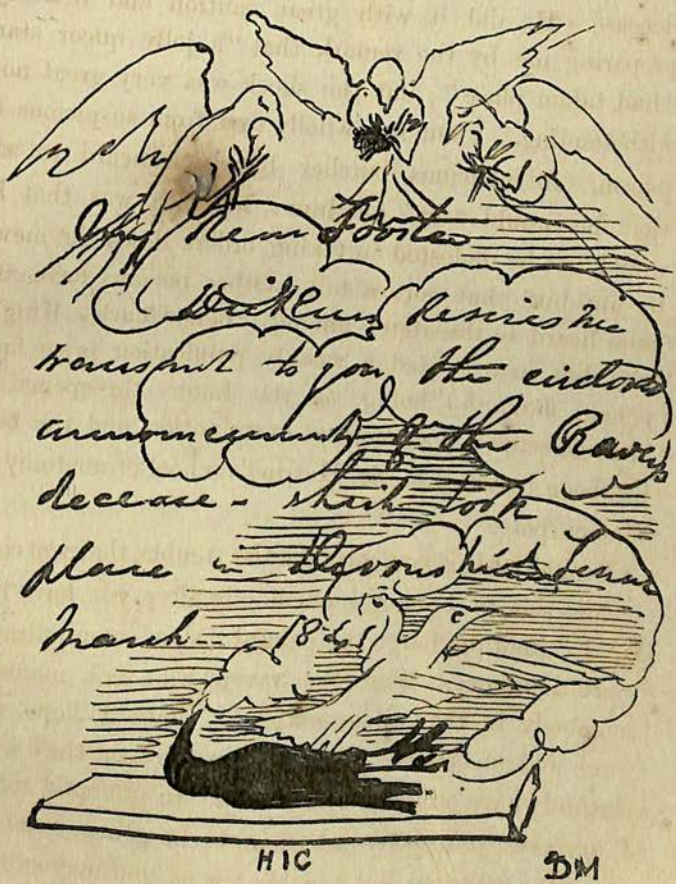
Family mourners.

'were, and at others I fear they were not, or they would 'certainly have stolen it by the way. In profound sorrow, 'I am ever your bereaved friend C. D. Kate is as well 'as can be expected, but terribly low as you may suppose. 'The children seem rather glad of it. He bit their ancles. 'But that was play.'

Maclise's covering letter was an apotheosis, to be rendered only in facsimile.

LONDON: 1841.

Death of raven.



Apotheosis by Maclise.

LONDON: 1841.

Grip the second.

In what way the loss was replaced, so that *Barnaby* should have the fruit of continued study of the habits of the family of birds which Grip had so nobly represented, Dickens has told in the preface to the story; and another, older, and larger Grip, obtained through Mr. Smithson, was installed in the stable, almost before the stuffed remains of his honoured predecessor had been sent home in a glass case, by way of ornament to his master's study.

C. D. to J. F.

I resume our correspondence on what he was writing. 'I see there is yet room for a few lines,' (25th March) 'and you are quite right in wishing what I cut out to be 'restored. I did not want Joe to be so short about Dolly, 'and really wrote his references to that young lady care-'fully—as natural things with a meaning in them. Chig-'well, my dear fellow, is the greatest place in the world.

The inn at Chigwell.

'Name your day for going. Such a delicious old inn 'opposite the churchyard—such a lovely ride—such beau-'tiful forest scenery—such an out of the way, rural, place '—such a sexton! I say again, name your day.' The day was named at once; and the whitest of stones marks it, in now sorrowful memory. His promise was exceeded by our enjoyment; and his delight in the double recog-

Reception there.

nition, of himself and of *Barnaby*, by the landlord of the nice old inn, far exceeded any pride he would have taken in what the world thinks the highest sort of honour.

'I have shut myself up' (26th March) 'by myself to-'day, and mean to try and "go it" at the *Clock;* Kate 'being out, and the house peacefully dismal. I don't 'remember altering the exact part you object to, but if 'there be anything here you object to, knock it out ruth-

'lessly.' 'Don't fail' (April the 5th) 'to erase anything 'that seems to you too strong. It is difficult for me to 'judge what tells too much, and what does not. I am 'trying a very quiet number to set against this necessary 'one. I hope it will be good, but I am in very sad condi-'tion for work. Glad you think this powerful. What I 'have put in is more relief, from the raven.' Two days later: 'I have done that number and am now going to 'work on another. I am bent (please Heaven) on finish-'ing the first chapter by Friday night. I hope to look in 'upon you to-night, when we'll dispose of the toasts for 'Saturday. Still bilious—but a good number, I hope, not-'withstanding. Jeffrey has come to town and was here 'yesterday.' The toasts to be disposed of were those to be given at the dinner on the 10th to celebrate the second volume of *Master Humphrey:* when Talfourd presided, there was much jollity, and, according to the memorandum drawn up that Saturday night now lying before me, we all in the greatest good humour glorified each other: Talfourd proposing the *Clock*, Macready Mrs. Dickens, Dickens the publishers, and myself the artists; Macready giving Talfourd, Talfourd Macready, Dickens myself, and myself the comedian Mr. Harley, whose humorous songs had been the not least considerable element in the mirth of the evening.

LONDON: 1841.

Working alone.

A 'Clock' dinner.

Five days later he writes: 'I finished the number 'yesterday, and, although I dined with Jeffrey, and was 'obliged to go to Lord Denman's afterwards (which made 'me late), have done eight slips of the *Lamplighter* for 'Mrs. Macrone, this morning. When I have got that off

Lord Jeffrey in London.

LONDON: 1841.

The *Lamplighter.*

Pic Nic Papers.

C. D. to J. F.

Character of Lord George Gordon.

'my mind, I shall try to go on steadily, fetching up the '*Clock* lee-way.' The *Lamplighter* was his old farce,* which he now turned into a comic tale; and this, with other contributions given him by friends and edited by him as *Pic Nic Papers*, enabled him to help the widow of his old publisher in her straitened means by a gift of £300. He had finished his work of charity before he next wrote of *Barnaby Rudge*, but he was fetching up his lee-way lazily. 'I am getting on' (29th of April) 'very slowly. 'I want to stick to the story; and the fear of committing 'myself, because of the impossibility of trying back or 'altering a syllable, makes it much harder than it looks. 'It was too bad of me to give you the trouble of cutting 'the number, but I knew so well you would do it in the 'right places. For what Harley would call the "onward '"work" I really think I have some famous thoughts.' There is an interval of a month before the next allusion. 'Solomon's expression' (3rd of June) 'I meant to be one 'of those strong ones to which strong circumstances give 'birth in the commonest minds. Deal with it as you 'like. . . . . Say what you please of Gordon' (I had objected to some points in his view of this madman, stated much too favourably as I thought), 'he must have 'been at heart a kind man, and a lover of the despised and 'rejected, after his own fashion. He lived upon a small 'income, and always within it; was known to relieve the 'necessities of many people; exposed in his place the 'corrupt attempt of a minister to buy him out of Parlia-'ment; and did great charities in Newgate. He always

* See *ante*, pp. 103 and 160.

'spoke on the people's side, and tried against his muddled 'brains to expose the profligacy of both parties. He never 'got anything by his madness, and never sought it. The 'wildest and most raging attacks of the time, allow him 'these merits: and not to let him have 'em in their full 'extent, remembering in what a (politically) wicked time 'he lived, would lie upon my conscience heavily. The libel 'he was imprisoned for when he died, was on the queen of 'France; and the French government interested themselves 'warmly to procure his release—which I think they might 'have done, but for Lord Grenville.' I was more successful in the counsel I gave against a fancy he had at this part of the story, that he would introduce as actors in the Gordon riots three splendid fellows who should order, lead, control, and be obeyed as natural guides of the crowd in that delirious time, and who should turn out, when all was over, to have broken out from Bedlam: but though he saw the unsoundness of this, he could not so readily see, in Gordon's case, the danger of taxing ingenuity to ascribe a reasonable motive to acts of sheer insanity. The feeblest parts of the book are those in which Lord George and his secretary appear.

LONDON: 1841.

Unprofitable madness.

A doubtful fancy.

He left for Scotland after the middle of June, but he took work with him. 'You may suppose,' he wrote from Edinburgh on the 30th, 'I have not done much work—but 'by Friday night's post from here I hope to send the first 'long chapter of a number and both the illustrations; 'from Loch-earn on Tuesday night, the closing chapter 'of that number; from the same place on Thursday night, 'the first long chapter of another, with both the illustra-

From Edinburgh: C. D. to J. F.

LONDON: 1841.

'tions; and, from some place which no man ever spelt but 'which sounds like Ballyhoolish, on Saturday, the closing 'chapter of that number, which will leave us all safe till I 'return to town.' Nine days later he wrote from 'Balle- 'chelish:' 'I have done all I can or need do in the way of '*Barnaby* until I come home, and the story is progressing '(I hope you will think) to good strong interest. I have left 'it, I think, at an exciting point, with a good dawning of 'the riots. In the first of the two numbers I have written 'since I have been away, I forget whether the blind man, 'in speaking to Barnaby about riches, tells him they are 'to be found in *crowds*. If I have not actually used that 'word, will you introduce it? A perusal of the proof of 'the following number (70) will show you how, and why.'

Interest in his new labour.

C. D. to J. F.

'Have you,' he wrote, shortly after his return (29th July), 'seen no. 71? I thought there was a good glimpse of a 'crowd, from a window—eh?' He had now taken thoroughly to the interest of his closing chapters, and felt more than ever the constraints of his form of publication. 'I am warming up very much' (on the 5th August from Broadstairs) 'about *Barnaby*. Oh! If I only had him, 'from this time to the end, in monthly numbers. *N'importe!* I hope the interest will be pretty strong—and, 'in every number, stronger.' Six days later, from the same place: 'I was always sure I could make a good thing of '*Barnaby*, and I think you'll find that it comes out 'strong to the last word. I have another number ready, 'all but two slips. Don't fear for young Chester. The 'time hasn't come——there we go again, you see, with 'the weekly delays. I am in great heart and spirits

Constraints of weekly publication.

'with the story, and with the prospect of having time 'to think before I go on again.' A month's interval followed, and what occupied it will be described shortly. On the 11th September he wrote: 'I have just burnt 'into Newgate, and am going in the next number to 'tear the prisoners out by the hair of their heads. The 'number which gets into the jail you'll have in proof by 'Tuesday.' This was followed up a week later: 'I have 'let all the prisoners out of Newgate, burnt down Lord 'Mansfield's, and played the very devil. Another number 'will finish the fires, and help us on towards the end. I 'feel quite smoky when I am at work. I want elbow-'room terribly.' To this trouble, graver supervened at his return, a serious personal sickness not the least; but he bore up gallantly, and I had never better occasion than now to observe his quiet endurance of pain, how little he thought of himself where the sense of self is commonly supreme, and the manful duty with which everything was done that, ailing as he was, he felt it necessary to do. He was still in his sick-room (22nd October) when he wrote: 'I hope I shan't leave off any more, now, until 'I have finished *Barnaby*.' Three days after that, he was busying himself eagerly for others; and on the 2nd of November the printers received the close of *Barnaby Rudge*.

LONDON: 1841.

The prison-riots.

Serious illness.

Close of *Barnaby*.

This tale was Dickens's first attempt out of the sphere of the life of the day and its actual manners. Begun during the progress of *Oliver Twist*, it had been for some time laid aside; the form it ultimately took had been comprised only partially within its first design; and the story

Character of the book.

LONDON: 1841.

in its finished shape presented strongly a special purpose, the characteristic of all but his very earliest writings. Its scene is laid at the time when the incessant execution of men and women, comparatively innocent, disgraced every part of the country; demoralizing thousands, whom it also prepared for the scaffold. In those days the theft of a few rags from a bleaching ground, or the abstraction of a roll of ribbons from a counter, was visited with the penalty of blood; and such laws brutalized both their ministers and victims. It was the time, too, when a false religious outcry brought with it appalling guilt and misery. These are vices that leave more behind them than the first forms assumed, and they involve a lesson sufficiently required to justify a writer in dealing with them. There were also others grafted on them. In Barnaby himself it was desired to show what sources of comfort there might be, for the patient and cheerful heart, in even the worst of all human afflictions; and in the hunted life of his outcast father, whose crime had entailed not that affliction only but other more fearful wretchedness, we have as powerful a picture as any in his writings of the inevitable and unfathomable consequences of sin. But, as the story went on, it was incident to these designs that what had been accomplished in its predecessor could hardly be attained here, in singleness of purpose, unity of idea, or harmony of treatment; and other defects supervened in the management of the plot. The interest with which the tale begins, has ceased to be its interest before the close; and what has chiefly taken the reader's fancy at the outset, almost wholly disappears in the power and passion

Lessons of *Barnaby Rudge.*

Defects in the plot.

with which, in the later chapters, the great riots are described. So admirable is this description, however, that it would be hard to have to surrender it even for a more perfect structure of fable. LONDON: 1841. The No-Popery riots.

There are few things more masterly in any of his books. From the first low mutterings of the storm to its last terrible explosion, this frantic outbreak of popular ignorance and rage is depicted with unabated power. The aimlessness of idle mischief by which the ranks of the rioters are swelled at the beginning; the recklessness induced by the monstrous impunity allowed to the early excesses; the sudden spread of this drunken guilt into every haunt of poverty, ignorance, or mischief in the wicked old city, where the rich materials of crime lie festering; the wild action of its poison on all, without scheme or plan of any kind, who come within its reach; the horrors that are more bewildering for this complete absence of purpose in them; and, when all is done, the misery found to have been self-inflicted in every cranny and corner of London, as if a plague had swept over the streets: these are features in the picture of an actual occurrence, to which the manner of the treatment gives extraordinary force and meaning. Nor, in the sequel, is there anything displayed with more profitable vividness, than the law's indiscriminate cruelty at last, in contrast with its cowardly indifference at first; while, among the casual touches lighting up the scene with flashes of reality that illumine every part of it, may be instanced the discovery, in the quarter from which screams for succour are loudest when Newgate is supposed to be Descriptive power. Vivid touches.

LONDON: 1841.

accidentally on fire, of four men who were certain in any case to have perished on the drop next day.

Principal characters.

The story, which has unusually careful writing in it, and much manly upright thinking, has not so many people eagerly adopted as of kin by everybody, as its predecessors are famous for; but it has yet a fair proportion of such as take solid form within the mind, and keep hold of the memory. To these belong in an especial degree Gabriel Varden and his household, on whom are lavished all the writer's fondness, and not a little of his keenest humour. The honest locksmith with his jovial jug, and the tink-tink-tink of his pleasant nature making cheerful music out of steel and iron; the buxom wife, with her plaguy tongue that makes every one wretched whom her kindly disposition would desire to make happy; the good hearted plump little Dolly, coquettish minx of a daughter, with all she suffers and inflicts by her fickle winning ways, and her small self-admiring vanities; and Miggs the vicious and slippery, acid, amatory, and of uncomfortable figure, sower of family discontents and discords, who swears all the while she wouldn't make or meddle with 'em 'not for a annual 'gold mine and found in tea and sugar': there is not much social painting anywhere with a better domestic moral, than in all these; and a nice propriety of feeling and thought regulates the use of such satire throughout. No one knows more exactly how far to go with that formidable weapon; or understands better that what satirizes everything, in effect satirizes nothing.

Social satire.

Another excellent group is that which the story opens with, in the quaint old kitchen of the Maypole; John

Willett and his friends, genuinely comic creations all of them. Then we have Barnaby and his raven: the light-hearted idiot, as unconscious of guilt as of suffering, and happy with no sense but of the influences of nature; and the grave sly bird, with sufficient sense to make himself as unhappy as rascally habits will make the human animal. There is poor brutish Hugh, too, loitering lazily outside the Maypole door, with a storm of passions in him raging to be let loose; already the scaffold's withered fruit, as he is doomed to be its ripe offering; and though with all the worst instincts of the savage, yet not without also some of the best. Still farther out of kindly nature's pitying reach lurks the worst villain of the scene: with this sole claim to consideration, that it was by constant contact with the filthiest instrument of law and state he had become the mass of moral filth he is. Mr. Dennis the hangman is a portrait that Hogarth would have painted with the same wholesome severity of satire which is employed upon it in *Barnaby Rudge*.

LONDON: 1841.

Barnaby and his raven.

Dennis the hangman.

CHAPTER XV.

PUBLIC DINNER IN EDINBURGH.

1841.

LONDON: 1841.

AMONG the occurrences of the year, apart from the tale he was writing, the birth of his fourth child and second son has been briefly mentioned. 'I mean to call the 'boy Edgar,' he wrote the day after he was born (9th February), 'a good honest Saxon name, I think.' He changed his mind in a few days, however, on resolving to ask Landor to be godfather. This intention, as soon as formed, he announced to our excellent old friend; telling him it would give the child something to boast of, to be called Walter Landor, and that to call him so would do his own heart good. For, as to himself, whatever realities had gone out of the ceremony of christening, the meaning still remained in it of enabling him to form a relationship with friends he most loved: and as to the boy, he held that to give him a name to be proud of was to give him also another reason for doing nothing unworthy or untrue when he came to be a man. Walter alas! only lived to manhood. He obtained a military cadetship through the kindness of Miss Coutts, and died at Calcutta on the last day of 1863, in his 23rd year.

Son Walter.

Dies in Calcutta, 1863.

The interest taken by this distinguished lady in him and in his had begun, as I have said, at an earlier date than even this; and I remember, while *Oliver Twist* was going on, his pleasure because of her father's mention of him in a speech at Birmingham, for his advocacy of the cause of the poor. Whether to the new poor law Sir Francis Burdett objected as strongly as we have seen that Dickens did, as well as many other excellent men, who forgot the atrocities of the system it displaced in their indignation at the needless and cruel harshness with which it was worked at the outset, I have not at hand the means of knowing. But certainly this continued to be strongly the feeling of Dickens, who exulted in nothing so much as at any misadventure to the whigs in connection with it. 'How 'often used Black and I,' he wrote to me in April, 'to 'quarrel about the effect of the poor-law bill! Walter 'comes in upon the cry. See whether the whigs go out 'upon it.' It was the strong desire he had to make himself heard upon it, even in parliament, that led him not immediately to turn aside from a proposal, now privately made by some of the magnates of Reading, to bring him in for that borough; but the notion was soon dismissed, as, on its revival more than once in later times, it continued very wisely to be. His opinions otherwise were extremely radical at present, as will be apparent shortly; and he did not at all relish Peel's majority of one when it came soon after, and unseated the whigs. It was just now, I may add, he greatly enjoyed a quiet setting-down of Moore by Rogers at Sir Francis Burdett's table, for talking exaggerated toryism. So debased was the house of commons

LONDON: 1841.

Sir F. Burdett.

C. D. and the new poor-law.

Moore and Rogers.

LONDON: 1841.

by reform, said Moore, that a Burke, if you could find him, would not be listened to. 'No such thing, Tommy,' said Rogers; '*find yourself*, and they'd listen even to 'you.'

This was not many days before he hinted to me an intention soon to be carried out in a rather memorable manner. 'I have done nothing to-day' (18th March: we had bought books together, the day before, at Tom Hill's sale) 'but cut the *Swift*, looking into it with a delicious 'laziness in all manner of delightful places, and put poor 'Tom's books away. I had a letter from Edinburgh this 'morning, announcing that Jeffrey's visit to London will 'be the week after next; telling me that he drives about 'Edinburgh declaring there has been "nothing so good '"as Nell since Cordelia," which he writes also to all 'manner of people; and informing me of a desire in that 'romantic town to give me greeting and welcome. For 'this and other reasons I am disposed to make Scotland 'my destination in June rather than Ireland. Think, *do* 'think, meantime (here are ten good weeks), whether you 'couldn't, by some effort worthy of the owner of the 'gigantic helmet, go with us. Think of such a fortnight '—York, Carlisle, Berwick, your own Borders, Edinburgh, 'Rob Roy's country, railroads, cathedrals, country inns, 'Arthur's-seat, lochs, glens, and home by sea. DO think 'of this, seriously, at leisure.' It was very tempting, but not to be.

C. D. to J. F.

Jeffrey's praise of little Nell.

Resolve to visit Scotland.

Early in April Jeffrey came, many feasts and entertainments welcoming him, of which he very sparingly partook; and before he left, the visit to Scotland in June

was all duly arranged, to be initiated by the splendid welcome of a public dinner in Edinburgh, with Lord Jeffrey himself in the chair. Allan the painter had come up meanwhile, with increasing note of preparation; and it was while we were all regretting Wilkie's absence abroad, and Dickens with warrantable pride was saying how surely the great painter would have gone to this dinner, that the shock of his sudden death * came, and there was left but the sorrowful satisfaction of honouring his memory. There was one other change before the day. 'I heard from 'Edinburgh this morning,' he wrote on the 15th of June. 'Jeffrey is not well enough to take the chair, so Wilson 'does. I think under all circumstances of politics, 'acquaintance, and *Edinburgh Review*, that it's much 'better as it is—Don't you?'

LONDON: 1841.

Edinburgh dinner proposed.

Sir David Wilkie's death.

His first letter from Edinburgh, where he and Mrs. Dickens had taken up quarters at the Royal-hotel on their arrival the previous night, is dated the 23rd of June. 'I have been this morning to the Parliament-house, and 'am now introduced (I hope) to everybody in Edinburgh. 'The hotel is perfectly besieged, and I have been forced 'to take refuge in a sequestered apartment at the end of 'a long passage, wherein I write this letter. They talk of '300 at the dinner. We are very well off in point of 'rooms, having a handsome sitting-room, another next to 'it for *Clock* purposes, a spacious bed-room, and large 'dressing-room adjoining. The castle is in front of the

EDINBURGH: 23rd June.

C. D. to J. F.

* Dickens refused to believe it at first. 'My heart assures me Wilkie 'liveth,' he wrote. 'He is the sort of man who will be VERY old when he dies' —and certainly one would have said so.

EDINBURGH: 1841.

'windows, and the view noble. There was a supper ready 'last night which would have been a dinner anywhere.' This was his first practical experience of the honours his fame had won for him, and it found him as eager to receive as all were eager to give. Very interesting still, too, are those who took leading part in the celebration; and, in his pleasant sketches of them, there are some once famous and familiar figures not so well known to the present generation. Here, among the first, are Wilson and Robertson.

Peter Robertson.

'The renowned Peter Robertson is a large, portly, full-'faced man with a merry eye, and a queer way of looking 'under his spectacles which is characteristic and pleasant. 'He seems a very warm-hearted earnest man too, and I 'felt quite at home with him forthwith. Walking up and 'down the hall of the courts of law (which was full of 'advocates, writers to the signet, clerks, and idlers) was a

Professor Wilson.

'tall, burly, handsome man of eight and fifty, with a gait 'like O'Connell's, the bluest eye you can imagine, and 'long hair—longer than mine—falling down in a wild way 'under the broad brim of his hat. He had on a surtout 'coat, a blue checked shirt; the collar standing up, and 'kept in its place with a wisp of black neckerchief; no

C. D. to J. F.

'waistcoat; and a large pocket-handkerchief thrust into 'his breast, which was all broad and open. At his heels 'followed a wiry, sharp-eyed, shaggy devil of a terrier, 'dogging his steps as he went slashing up and down, now 'with one man beside him, now with another, and now 'quite alone, but always at a fast, rolling pace, with his 'head in the air, and his eyes as wide open as he could

get them. I guessed it was Wilson, and it was.' A 'bright, clear-complexioned, mountain-looking fellow, he 'looks as though he had just come down from the High- 'lands, and had never in his life taken pen in hand. But 'he has had an attack of paralysis in his right arm, 'within this month. He winced when I shook hands 'with him; and once or twice when we were walking up 'and down, slipped as if he had stumbled on a piece of 'orange-peel. He is a great fellow to look at, and to talk 'to; and, if you could divest your mind of the actual 'Scott, is just the figure you would put in his place.'

Edinburgh: 1841.

C. D.

A fancy of Scott.

Nor have the most ordinary incidents of the visit any lack of interest for us now, in so far as they help to complete the picture of himself. 'Allan has been squiring 'me about, all the morning. He and Fletcher have gone 'to a meeting of the dinner-stewards, and I take the 'opportunity of writing to you. They dine with us to- 'day, and we are going to-night to the theatre. M'Ian 'is playing there. I mean to leave a card for him 'before evening. We are engaged for every day of our 'stay, already; but the people I have seen are so very 'hearty and warm in their manner that much of the 'horrors of lionization gives way before it. I am glad to 'find that they propose giving me for a toast on Friday 'the Memory of Wilkie. I should have liked it better 'than anything, if I could have made my choice. Com- 'municate all particulars to Mac. I would to God you 'were both here. Do dine together at the Gray's-inn on 'Friday, and think of me. If I don't drink my first glass 'of wine to you, may my pistols miss fire, and my mare

Lionization made tolerable.

EDINBURGH: 1841.

'slip her shoulder. All sorts of regard from Kate. She 'has gone with Miss Allan to see the house she was born 'in, &c. Write me soon, and long, &c.'

Thoughts of home.

His next letter was written the morning after the dinner, on Saturday the 26th June. 'The great event is 'over; and being gone, I am a man again. It was the 'most brilliant affair you can conceive; the completest 'success possible, from first to last. The room was 'crammed, and more than seventy applicants for tickets 'were of necessity refused yesterday. Wilson was ill, but 'plucked up like a lion, and spoke famously.* I send you

The dinner.

The speeches.

* The speeches generally were good, but the descriptions in the text by himself will here be thought sufficient. One or two sentences ought however to be given to show the tone of Wilson's praise, and I will only preface them by the remark that Dickens's acknowledgments, as well as his tribute to Wilkie, were expressed with great felicity; and that Peter Robertson seems to have thrown the company into convulsions of laughter by his imitation of Dominie Sampson's PRO-DI-GI-OUS, in a supposed interview between that worthy schoolmaster and Mr. Squeers of Dotheboys. I now quote from Professor Wilson's speech:

Dominie Sampson and Mr. Squeers.

'Our friend has mingled in the common walks of life; he has made himself 'familiar with the lower orders of society. He has not been deterred by the 'aspect of vice and wickedness, and misery and guilt, from seeking a spirit of 'good in things evil, but has endeavoured by the might of genius to transmute 'what was base into what is precious as the beaten gold . . . . But I shall be 'betrayed, if I go on much longer—which it would be improper for me to do '—into something like a critical delineation of the genius of our illustrious 'guest. I shall not attempt that; but I cannot but express in a few ineffec-'tual words, the delight which every human bosom feels in the benign spirit 'which pervades all his creations. How kind and good a man he is, I need 'not say; nor what strength of genius he has acquired by that profound sym-'pathy with his fellow-creatures, whether in prosperity and happiness, or over-'whelmed with unfortunate circumstances, but who yet do not sink under their 'miseries, but trust to their own strength of endurance, to that principle of 'truth and honour and integrity which is no stranger to the uncultivated 'bosom, and which is found in the lowest abodes in as great strength as in the 'halls of nobles and the palaces of kings. Mr. Dickens is also a satirist. He 'satirizes human life, but he does not satirize it to degrade it. He does not

Professor Wilson's speech.

'a paper herewith, but the report is dismal in the extreme. They say there will be a better one—I don't know where or when. Should there be, I will send it to you. I *think* (ahem!) that I spoke rather well. It was an excellent room, and both the subjects (Wilson and Scottish Literature, and the Memory of Wilkie) were good to go upon. There were nearly two hundred ladies present. The place is so contrived that the cross table is raised enormously: much above the heads of people sitting below: and the effect on first coming in (on me, I mean) was rather tremendous. I was quite self-possessed however, and, notwithstanding the enthoosemoosy, which was very startling, as cool as a cucumber. I wish to God you had been there, as it is impossible for the "distinguished guest" to describe the scene.' It beat all natur'. . . .

EDINBURGH: 1841.

C. D. to J. F.

His reception.

Here was the close of his letter. 'I have been expecting every day to hear from you, and not hearing mean to make this the briefest epistle possible. We start next Sunday (that's to-morrow week). We are going

'wish to pull down what is high into the neighbourhood of what is low. He does not seek to represent all virtue as a hollow thing, in which no confidence can be placed. He satirizes only the selfish, and the hard-hearted, and the cruel. Our distinguished guest may not have given us, as yet, a full and complete delineation of the female character. But this he has done: he has not endeavoured to represent women as charming merely by the aid of accomplishments, however elegant and graceful. He has not depicted those accomplishments as their essentials, but has spoken of them rather as always inspired by a love of domesticity, by fidelity, by purity, by innocence, by charity, and by hope, which makes them discharge, under the most difficult circumstances, their duties; and which brings over their path in this world some glimpses of the light of heaven. Mr. Dickens may be assured that there is felt for him all over Scotland a sentiment of kindness, affection, admiration, and love; and I know for certain that the knowledge of these sentiments must make him happy.'

Professor Wilson *loq.*

EDINBURGH: 1841.

C. D. to J. F.

'out to Jeffrey's to-day (he is very unwell), and return 'here to-morrow evening. If I don't find a letter from 'you when I come back, expect no Lights and Shadows 'of Scottish Life from your indignant correspondent. 'Murray the manager made very excellent, tasteful, and 'gentlemanly mention of Macready, about whom Wilson 'had been asking me divers questions during dinner.' 'A hundred thanks for your letter,' he writes four days later. 'I read it this morning with the greatest pleasure 'and delight, and answer it with ditto, ditto. Where shall 'I begin — about my darlings? I am delighted with 'Charley's precocity. He takes arter his father, he does. 'God bless them, you can't imagine (*you!* how can you!) 'how much I long to see them. It makes me quite 'sorrowful to think of them. . . . Yesterday, sir, the lord 'provost, council, and magistrates voted me by acclamation 'the freedom of the city, in testimony (I quote the letter 'just received from "James Forrest, lord provost") "of the '"sense entertained by them of your distinguished abilities '"as an author." I acknowledged this morning in appro- 'priate terms the honour they had done me, and through 'me the pursuit to which I was devoted. It *is* handsome, 'is it not?'

Home yearnings.

Freedom of the city voted to him.

The parchment scroll of the city-freedom, recording the grounds on which it was voted, hung framed in his study to the last, and was one of his valued possessions. Answering some question of mine he told me further as to the speakers, and gave some amusing glimpses of the party-spirit which still at that time ran high in the capital of the north.

'The men who spoke at the dinner were all the most 'rising men here, and chiefly at the Bar. They were all, 'alternately, whigs and tories; with some few radicals, 'such as Gordon, who gave the memory of Burns. He is 'Wilson's son-in-law and the lord advocate's nephew—a 'very masterly speaker indeed, who ought to become a 'distinguished man. Neaves, who gave the other poets, 'a *little* too lawyer-like for my taste, is a great gun in the 'courts. Mr. Primrose is Lord Rosebery's son. Adam 'Black, the publisher as you know. Dr. Alison, a very 'popular friend of the poor. Robertson you know. Allan 'you know. Colquhoun is an advocate. All these men 'were selected for the toasts as being crack speakers, 'known men, and opposed to each other very strongly in 'politics. For this reason, the professors and so forth who 'sat upon the platform about me made no speeches and 'had none assigned them. I felt it was very remarkabl' 'to see such a number of grey-headed men gathered 'about my brown flowing locks; and it struck most of 'those who were present very forcibly. The judges, soli- 'citor-general, lord-advocate, and so forth, were all here to 'call, the day after our arrival. The judges never go to 'public dinners in Scotland. Lord Meadowbank alone 'broke through the custom, and none of his successors 'have imitated him. It will give you a good notion of '*party* to hear that the solicitor-general and lord- 'advocate refused to go, though they had previously 'engaged, *unless* the croupier or the chairman were a 'whig. Both (Wilson and Robertson) were tories, simply 'because, Jeffrey excepted, no whig could be found who

EDINBURGH: 1841.

C. D. to J. F.

Speakers.

Politics and party.

The judges.

The law-officers.

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'was adapted to the office. The solicitor laid strict in-
'junctions on Napier not to go if a whig were not in office.
'No whig was, and he stayed away. I think this is good?
'—bearing in mind that all the old whigs of Edinburgh
Whig jealousies. 'were cracking their throats in the room. They give out
'that they were ill, and the lord-advocate did actually lie
'in bed all the afternoon; but this is the real truth, and
'one of the judges told it me with great glee. It seems
'they couldn't quite trust Wilson or Robertson, as they
'thought; and feared some tory demonstration. Nothing
'of the kind took place; and ever since, these men have
'been the loudest in their praises of the whole affair.'

The close of his letter tells us all his engagements, and completes his grateful picture of the hearty Scottish welcome given him. It has also some personal touches that may be thought worth preserving. 'A threat reached me
Rumours from Glasgow. 'last night (they have been hammering at it in their
'papers, it seems, for some time) of a dinner at Glasgow.
'But I hope, having circulated false rumours of my move-
'ments, to get away before they send to me; and only to
C. D. to J. F. 'stop there on my way home, to change horses and send
'to the post-office. . . . You will like to know how we
'have been living. Here's a list of engagements, past and
'present. Wednesday, we dined at home, and went incog.
At the theatre. 'to the theatre at night, to Murray's box: the pieces
'admirably done, and M'Ian in the *Two Drovers* quite
'wonderful, and most affecting. Thursday, to Lord Mur-
'ray's; dinner and evening party. Friday, *the* dinner.
'Saturday, to Jeffrey's, a beautiful place about three miles
'off' (Craig-crook, which at Lord Jeffrey's invitation I

afterwards visited with him), 'stop there all night, dine 'on Sunday, and home at eleven. Monday, dine at Dr. 'Alison's, four miles off. Tuesday, dinner and evening party at Allan's. Wednesday, breakfast with Napier, 'dine with Blackwoods seven miles off, evening party at 'the treasurer's of the town-council, supper with all the 'artists (!!). Thursday, lunch at the solicitor-general's, 'dine at Lord Gillies's, evening party at Joseph Gordon's, 'one of Brougham's earliest supporters. Friday, dinner 'and evening party at Robertson's. Saturday, dine again 'at Jeffrey's; back to the theatre, at half-past nine to the 'moment, for public appearance;* places all let, &c. &c. &c. 'Sunday, off at seven o'clock in the morning to Stirling, 'and then to Callender, a stage further. Next day, to 'Loch-earn, and pull up there for three days, to rest and 'work. The moral of all this is, that there is no place 'like home; and that I thank God most heartily for 'having given me a quiet spirit, and a heart that won't 'hold many people. I sigh for Devonshire-terrace and 'Broadstairs, for battledore and shuttlecock; I want to 'dine in a blouse with you and Mac; and I feel Topping's 'merits more acutely than I have ever done in my 'life. On Sunday evening the 17th of July I shall 'revisit my household gods, please heaven. I wish the 'day were here. For God's sake be in waiting. I wish 'you and Mac would dine in Devonshire-terrace that

EDINBURGH: 1841.

Hospitalities.

Moral of it all.

* On this occasion, as he told me afterwards, the orchestra did a double stroke of business, much to the amazement of himself and his friends, by improvising at his entrance *Charley is my Darling*, amid tumultuous shouts of delight.

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'day with Fred. He has the key of the cellar. *Do.*
'We shall be at Inverary in the Highlands on Tuesday
'week, getting to it through the pass of Glencoe, of which
'you may have heard! On Thursday following we shall
'be at Glasgow, where I shall hope to receive your last
'letter before we meet. At Inverary, too, I shall make
'sure of finding at least one, at the post-office. . . . Little
'Allan is trying hard for the post of queen's limner for
'Scotland, vacant by poor Wilkie's death. Every one is
'in his favor but —— who is jobbing for some one else.
'Appoint him, will you, and I'll give up the premier-ship.
'—How I breakfasted to-day in the house where Scott
'lived seven and twenty years; how I have made solemn
'pledges to write about missing children in the *Edinburgh*
'*Review*, and will do my best to keep them; how I
'have declined to be brought in, free gratis for nothing and
'qualified to boot, for a Scotch county that's going a-beg-
'ging, lest I should be thought to have dined on Friday
'under false pretences; these, with other marvels, shall be
'yours anon. . . . I must leave off sharp, to get dressed
'and off upon the seven miles dinner trip. Kate's affec-
'tionate regards. My hearty loves to Mac and Grim.'

Proposed visit to the Highlands.

Allan and Wilkie.

Offer of a seat.

Maclise and Macready.

Grim was another great artist having the same beginning to his name, whose tragic studies had suggested an epithet quite inapplicable to any of his personal qualities.

The narrative of the trip to the Highlands must have a chapter to itself and its incidents of adventure and comedy. The latter chiefly were due to the guide who accompanied him, a quasi-highlander himself, named a few pages back as Mr. Kindheart, whose real name was

Guide to the Highlands.

Mr. Angus Fletcher, and to whom it hardly needs that I should give other mention than will be supplied by such future notices of him as my friend's letters may contain. He had a wayward kind of talent, which he could never concentrate on a settled pursuit; and though at the time we knew him first he had taken up the profession of a sculptor, he abandoned it soon afterwards. His mother, a woman distinguished by many remarkable qualities, lived now in the English lake-country; and it was no fault of hers that this home was no longer her son's. But what mainly had closed it to him was undoubtedly not less the secret of such liking for him as Dickens had. Fletcher's eccentricities and absurdities, often divided by the thinnest partition from the most foolish extravagance, but occasionally clever, and always the genuine though whimsical outgrowth of the life he led, had a curious sort of charm for Dickens. He enjoyed the oddity and humour; tolerated all the rest; and to none more freely than to Kindheart during the next few years, both in Italy and in England, opened his house and hospitality. The close of the poor fellow's life, alas! was in only too sad agreement with all the previous course of it; but this will have mention hereafter. He is waiting now to introduce Dickens to the Highlands.

EDINBURGH: 1841.

Angus Fletcher.

CHAPTER XVI.

ADVENTURES IN THE HIGHLANDS.

1841.

THE HIGHLANDS: 1841.

C. D. to J. F.

FROM Loch-earn-head Dickens wrote on Monday the 5th of July, having reached it, 'wet through,' at four that afternoon. 'Having had a great deal to do in a crowded 'house on Saturday night at the theatre, we left Edin- 'burgh yesterday morning at half past seven, and travelled, 'with Fletcher for our guide, to a place called Stewart's- 'hotel, nine miles further than Callender. We had 'neglected to order rooms, and were obliged to make a 'sitting-room of our own bed-chamber; in which my 'genius for stowing furniture away was of the very greatest 'service. Fletcher slept in a kennel with three panes of 'glass in it, which formed part and parcel of a window; 'the other three panes whereof belonged to a man who 'slept on the other side of the partition. He told me this

A fright.

'morning that he had had a nightmare all night, and had 'screamed horribly, he knew. The stranger, as you may 'suppose, hired a gig and went off at full gallop with the 'first glimpse of daylight.* Being very tired (for we had

* Poor good Mr. Fletcher had, among his other peculiarities, a habit of venting any particular emotion in a wildness of cry that went beyond even the

'not had more than three hours' sleep on the previous 'night) we lay till ten this morning; and at half past 'eleven went through the Trossachs to Loch-katrine, 'where I walked from the hotel after tea last night. It is 'impossible to say what a glorious scene it was. It rained 'as it never does rain anywhere but here. We conveyed 'Kate up a rocky pass to go and see the island of the 'Lady of the Lake, but she gave in after the first five 'minutes, and we left her, very picturesque and uncomfort- 'able, with Tom' (the servant they had brought with them from Devonshire-terrace) 'holding an umbrella over 'her head, while we climbed on. When we came back, 'she had gone into the carriage. We were wet through 'to the skin, and came on in that state four and twenty 'miles. Fletcher is very good natured, and of extraor- 'dinary use in these outlandish parts. His habit of going 'into kitchens and bars, disconcerting at Broadstairs, is

THE HIGHLANDS: 1841.

C. D. to J. F.

The Trossachs.

Island of the Lady of the Lake.

The travellers' guide

descriptive power of his friend, who referred to it frequently in his Broadstairs letters. Here is an instance (20th Sept. 1840) 'Mrs. M. being in the 'next machine the other day heard him howl like a wolf (as he does) when he 'first touched the cold water. I am glad to have my former story in that 'respect confirmed. There is no sound on earth like it. In the infernal 'regions there may be, but elsewhere there is no compound addition of wild 'beasts that could produce its like for their total. The description of the 'wolves in *Robinson Crusoe* is the nearest thing; but it's feeble—very feeble '—in comparison.' Of the generally amiable side to all his eccentricities I am tempted to give an illustration from the same letter. 'An alarming report 'being brought to me the other day that he was preaching, I betook myself to 'the spot and found he was reading Wordsworth to a family on the terrace, 'outside the house, in the open air and public way. The whole town were 'out. When he had given them a taste of Wordsworth, he sent home for 'Mrs. Norton's book, and entertained them with selections from that. He 'concluded with an imitation of Mrs. Hemans reading her own poetry, which 'he performed with a pocket-handkerchief over his head to imitate her veil '—all this in public, before everybody.'

Fletcher's eccentricities.

THE HIGHLANDS: 1841.

C. D. to J. F.

'here of great service. Not expecting us till six, they 'hadn't lighted our fires when we arrived here; and if you 'had seen him (with whom the responsibility of the 'omission rested) running in and out of the sitting-room 'and the two bed-rooms with a great pair of bellows, with 'which he distractedly blew each of the fires out in turn,

A comical picture..

'you would have died of laughing. He had on his head a 'great highland cap, on his back a white coat, and cut such 'a figure as even the inimitable can't depicter . . .

'The Inns, inside and out, are the queerest places 'imaginable. From the road, this one,' at Loch-earn-head, 'looks like a white wall, with windows in it by 'mistake. We have a good sitting-room though, on the

Highland accommodation.

'first floor: as large (but not as lofty) as my study. The 'bedrooms are of that size which renders it impossible for 'you to move, after you have taken your boots off, without 'chipping pieces out of your legs. There isn't a basin in 'the Highlands which will hold my face; not a drawer 'which will open after you have put your clothes in it; 'not a water-bottle capacious enough to wet your tooth-'brush. The huts are wretched and miserable beyond all 'description. The food (for those who can pay for it) '"not bad," as M would say: oatcake, mutton, hotch 'potch, trout from the loch, small beer bottled, marmalade, 'and whiskey. Of the last-named article I have taken

Weather.

'about a pint to-day. The weather is what they call "soft" '—which means that the sky is a vast water-spout that 'never leaves off emptying itself; and the liquor has no 'more effect than water. . . . . I am going to work to-'morrow, and hope before leaving here to write you again.

'The elections have been sad work indeed. That they 'should return Sibthorp and reject Bulwer, is, by Heaven, 'a national disgrace. . . . I don't wonder the devil flew over 'Lincoln. The people were far too addle-headed, even for 'him. . . . . I don't bore you with accounts of Ben this and 'that, and Lochs of all sorts of names, but this is a 'wonderful region. The way the mists were stalking 'about to-day, and the clouds lying down upon the hills; 'the deep glens, the high rocks, the rushing waterfalls, and 'the roaring rivers down in deep gulfs below; were all 'stupendous. This house is wedged round by great heights 'that are lost in the clouds; and the loch, twelve miles long, 'stretches out its dreary length before the windows. In 'my next, I shall soar to the sublime, perhaps; in this 'here present writing I confine myself to the ridiculous. 'But I am always,' &c. &c.

THE HIGHLANDS: 1841.

C. D. to J. F.

Peel's elections.

Grand scenery.

His next letter bore the date of 'Ballechelish, Friday 'evening, ninth July, 1841, half past nine, P.M.' and described what we had often longed to see together, the Pass of Glencoe. . . . 'I can't go to bed without writing to 'you from here, though the post will not leave this place 'until we have left it, and arrived at another. On looking 'over the route which Lord Murray made out for me, I 'found he had put down Thursday next for Abbotsford 'and Dryburgh-abbey, and a journey of seventy miles 'besides! Therefore, and as I was happily able to steal 'a march upon myself at Loch-earn-head, and to finish 'in two days what I thought would take me three, we 'shall leave here to-morrow morning; and, by being a 'day earlier than we intended at all the places between

From Ballechelish.

Changes in route.

THE HIGHLANDS: 1841.

C. D. to J. F.

'this and Melrose (which we propose to reach by 'Wednesday night), we shall have a whole day for Scott's 'house and tomb, and still be at York on Saturday 'evening, and home, God willing, on Sunday. . . . We 'left Loch-earn-head last night, and went to a place called 'Killin, eight miles from it, where we slept. I walked 'some six miles with Fletcher after we got there, to see a

A waterfall.

'waterfall: and truly it was a magnificent sight, foaming 'and crashing down three great steeps of riven rock; 'leaping over the first as far off as you could carry your 'eye, and rumbling and foaming down into a dizzy pool 'below you, with a deafening roar. To-day we have had a 'journey of between 50 and 60 miles, through the bleakest 'and most desolate part of Scotland, where the hill-tops 'are still covered with great patches of snow, and the road 'winds over steep mountain passes, and on the brink of 'deep brooks and precipices. The cold all day has been '*intense*, and the rain sometimes most violent. It has 'been impossible to keep warm, by any means; even 'whiskey failed; the wind was too piercing even for that. 'One stage of ten miles, over a place called the Black-mount, 'took us two hours and a half to do; and when we came 'to a lone public called the King's-house, at the entrance

Entrance to Glencoe.

'to Glencoe—this was about three o'clock—we were well 'nigh frozen. We got a fire directly, and in twenty 'minutes they served us up some famous kippered salmon, 'broiled; a broiled fowl; hot mutton ham and poached 'eggs; pancakes; oatcake; wheaten bread; butter; 'bottled porter; hot water, lump sugar, and whiskey; of 'which we made a very hearty meal. All the way, the

'road had been among moors and mountains with huge 'masses of rock, which fell down God knows where, 'sprinkling the ground in every direction, and giving it 'the aspect of the burial place of a race of giants. Now 'and then we passed a hut or two, with neither window nor 'chimney, and the smoke of the peat fire rolling out at the 'door. But there were not six of these dwellings in a 'dozen miles; and anything so bleak and wild, and mighty 'in its loneliness, as the whole country, it is impossible 'to conceive. Glencoe itself is perfectly *terrible*. The 'pass is an awful place. It is shut in on each side by 'enormous rocks from which great torrents come rushing 'down in all directions. In amongst these rocks on one 'side of the pass (the left as we came) there are scores of 'glens, high up, which form such haunts as you might 'imagine yourself wandering in, in the very height and 'madness of a fever. They will live in my dreams for 'years—I was going to say as long as I live, and I 'seriously think so. The very recollection of them makes 'me shudder. . . Well, I will not bore you with my impres- 'sions of these tremendous wilds, but they really are 'fearful in their grandeur and amazing solitude. Wales 'is a mere toy compared with them.'

THE HIGHLANDS: 1841.

C. D. to J. F.

The pass of Glencoe.

The further mention of his guide's whimsical ways may stand, for it cannot now be the possible occasion of pain or annoyance, or of anything but very innocent laughter.

'We are now in a bare white house on the banks of 'Loch-leven, but in a comfortably furnished room on 'the top of the house—that is, on the first floor— 'with the rain pattering against the window as though

Loch Leven.

THE HIGHLANDS: 1841.

C. D. to J. F.

A July evening.

'it were December, the wind howling dismally, a cold 'damp mist on everything without, a blazing fire within 'halfway up the chimney, and a most infernal Piper 'practising under the window for a competition of pipers 'which is to come off shortly. . . . The store of anecdotes 'of Fletcher with which we shall return, will last a long 'time. It seems that the F's are an extensive clan, 'and that his father was a highlander. Accordingly, 'wherever he goes, he finds out some cotter or small 'farmer who is his cousin. I wish you could see him 'walking into his cousins' curds and cream, and into their 'dairies generally! Yesterday morning between eight and 'nine, I was sitting writing at the open window, when the 'postman came to the inn (which at Loch-earn-head is

Postal service at Loch-earn-head.

'the post office) for the letters. He is going away, when 'Fletcher, who has been writing somewhere below stairs, 'rushes out, and cries "Halloa there! Is that the Post?" '"Yes!" somebody answers. "Call him back!" says 'Fletcher: "Just sit down till I've done, *and don't go* '"*away till I tell you.*"—Fancy! The General Post, with 'the letters of forty villages in a leathern bag! . . . To-

Route homeward.

'morrow at Oban. Sunday at Inverary. Monday at Tarbet. 'Tuesday at Glasgow (and that night at Hamilton). 'Wednesday at Melrose. Thursday at Ditto. Friday I 'don't know where. Saturday at York. Sunday—how 'glad I shall be to shake hands with you. My love 'to Mac. I thought he'd have written once. Ditto to 'Macready. I had a very nice and welcome letter from 'him, and a most hearty one from Elliotson. . . . P.S. Half 'asleep. So, excuse drowsiness of matter and composition.

'I shall be full of joy to meet another letter from you! THE HIGHLANDS: 1841.
'. . . P.S. They speak Gaelic here, of course, and
'many of the common people understand very little C. D. to J. F.
'English. Since I wrote this letter, I rang the girl
'upstairs, and gave elaborate directions (you know my
'way) for a pint of sherry to be made into boiling negus;
'mentioning all the ingredients one by one, and particularly
'nutmeg. When I had quite finished, seeing her obviously The maid of the inn.
'bewildered, I said, with great gravity, "Now you know
'"what you're going to order?" "Oh yes. Sure." "What?"
'—a pause—"Just"—another pause—"Just plenty of
'"*nutbergs!*"'

The impression made upon him by the Pass of Glencoe was not overstated in this letter. It continued with him as he there expresses it; and, as we shall see hereafter, even where he expected to find Nature in her most Effect of Glencoe. desolate grandeur on the dreary waste of an American prairie, his imagination went back with a higher satisfaction to Glencoe. But his experience of it is not yet completely told. The sequel was in a letter of two days later date from 'Dalmally, Sunday, July the eleventh, '1841.'

'As there was no place of this name in our route, you At a place not in his route.
'will be surprised to see it at the head of this present
'writing. But our being here is a part of such moving
'accidents by flood and field as will astonish you. If you
'should happen to have your hat on, take it off, that your
'hair may stand on end without any interruption. To
'get from Ballyhoolish (as I am obliged to spell it when
'Fletcher is not in the way; and he is out at this moment)

THE HIGHLANDS: 1841.

C. D. to J. F.

'to Oban, it is necessary to cross two ferries, one of which 'is an arm of the sea, eight or ten miles broad. Into this 'ferry-boat, passengers, carriages, horses, and all, get bodily, 'and are got across by hook or by crook if the weather be

An adventure.

'reasonably fine. Yesterday morning, however, it blew 'such a strong gale that the landlord of the inn, where we 'had paid for horses all the way to Oban (thirty miles), 'honestly came upstairs just as we were starting, with the 'money in his hand, and told us it would be impossible to 'cross. There was nothing to be done but to come back 'five and thirty miles, through Glencoe and Inverouran, 'to a place called Tyndrum, whence a road twelve miles 'long crosses to Dalmally, which is sixteen miles from 'Inverary. Accordingly we turned back, and in a great 'storm of wind and rain began to retrace the dreary road 'we had come the day before. . . I was not at all ill pleased

Again through Glencoe.

'to have to come again through that awful Glencoe. If 'it had been tremendous on the previous day, yesterday 'it was perfectly horrific. It had rained all night, and 'was raining then, as it only does in these parts. Through 'the whole glen, which is ten miles long, torrents were 'boiling and foaming, and sending up in every direction

Torrents swollen with rain.

'spray like the smoke of great fires. They were rushing 'down every hill and mountain side, and tearing like 'devils across the path, and down into the depths of the 'rocks. Some of the hills looked as if they were full of 'silver, and had cracked in a hundred places. Others 'as if they were frightened, and had broken out into a 'deadly sweat. In others there was no compromise or 'division of streams, but one great torrent came roaring

'down with a deafening noise, and a rushing of water that 'was quite appalling. Such a *spaet*, in short (that's the 'country word), has not been known for many years, and 'the sights and sounds were beyond description. The post-'boy was not at all at his ease, and the horses were very 'much frightened (as well they might be) by the perpetual 'raging and roaring; one of them started as we came 'down a steep place, and we were within that much (——) 'of tumbling over a precipice; just then, too, the drag 'broke, and we were obliged to go on as we best could, 'without it: getting out every now and then, and hanging 'on at the back of the carriage to prevent its rolling down 'too fast, and going Heaven knows where. Well, in this 'pleasant state of things we came to King's-house again, 'having been four hours doing the sixteen miles. The 'rumble where Tom sat was by this time so full of water, 'that he was obliged to borrow a gimlet, and bore holes in 'the bottom to let it run out. The horses that were to 'take us on, were out upon the hills, somewhere within 'ten miles round; and three or four bare-legged fellows 'went out to look for 'em, while we sat by the fire and 'tried to dry ourselves. At last we got off again (without 'the drag and with a broken spring, no smith living 'within ten miles), and went limping on to Inverouran. 'In the first three miles we were in a ditch and out again, 'and lost a horse's shoe. All this time it never once left 'off raining; and was very windy, very cold, very misty, and 'most intensely dismal. So we crossed the Black-mount, 'and came to a place we had passed the day before, where 'a rapid river runs over a bed of broken rock. Now, this

THE HIGHLANDS: 1841.

C. D. to J. F.

Dangerous travelling.

Incidents and accidents.

THE HIGHLANDS: 1841.

C. D. to J. F.

Broken-down bridge.

'river, sir, had a bridge last winter, but the bridge broke 'down when the thaw came, and has never since been 'mended; so travellers cross upon a little platform, made 'of rough deal planks stretching from rock to rock; and 'carriages and horses ford the water, at a certain point. 'As the platform is the reverse of steady (we had proved this 'the day before), is very slippery, and affords anything but 'a pleasant footing, having only a trembling little rail on 'one side, and on the other nothing between it and the 'foaming stream, Kate decided to remain in the carriage, 'and trust herself to the wheels rather than to her feet. 'Fletcher and I had got out, and it was going away, when 'I advised her, as I had done several times before, to come 'with us; for I saw that the water was very high, the 'current being greatly swollen by the rain, and that the 'post-boy had been eyeing it in a very disconcerted manner

A fortunate resolve.

'for the last half hour. This decided her to come out; 'and Fletcher, she, Tom, and I, began to cross, while the 'carriage went about a quarter of a mile down the bank, 'in search of a shallow place. The platform shook so much 'that we could only come across two at a time, and then 'it felt as if it were hung on springs. As to the wind and 'rain! . . . well, put into one gust all the wind and rain you 'ever saw and heard, and you'll have some faint notion of 'it! When we got safely to the opposite bank, there came 'riding up a wild highlander, in a great plaid, whom we 'recognized as the landlord of the inn, and who without 'taking the least notice of us, went dashing on,—with the 'plaid he was wrapped in, streaming in the wind,— 'screeching in Gaelic to the post-boy on the opposite bank,

'and making the most frantic gestures you ever saw, in 'which he was joined by some other wild man on foot, 'who had come across by a short cut, knee-deep in mire 'and water. As we began to see what this meant, we '(that is, Fletcher and I) scrambled on after them, while 'the boy, horses, and carriage were plunging in the water, 'which left only the horses' heads and the boy's body 'visible. By the time we got up to them, the man on 'horseback and the men on foot were perfectly mad with 'pantomime; for as to any of their shouts being heard by 'the boy, the water made such a great noise that they 'might as well have been dumb. It made me quite sick 'to think how I should have felt if Kate had been inside. 'The carriage went round and round like a great stone, 'the boy was as pale as death, the horses were struggling 'and plashing and snorting like sea-animals, and we were 'all roaring to the driver to throw himself off and let 'them and the coach go to the devil, when suddenly it 'came all right (having got into shallow water), and, all 'tumbling and dripping and jogging from side to side, 'climbed up to the dry land. I assure you we looked 'rather queer, as we wiped our faces and stared at each 'other in a little cluster round about it. It seemed that 'the man on horseback had been looking at us through a 'telescope as we came to the track, and knowing that the 'place was very dangerous, and seeing that we meant to 'bring the carriage, had come on at a great gallop to show 'the driver the only place where he could cross. By the 'time he came up, the man had taken the water at a 'wrong place, and in a word was as nearly drowned (with

THE HIGHLANDS: 1841.

C. D. to J. F.

Post-boy in danger.

The rescue.

Narrow escape.

THE HIGHLANDS: 1841.

'carriage, horses, luggage, and all) as ever man was. 'Was *this* a good adventure?

C. D. to J. F.

'We all went on to the inn—the wild man galloping 'on first, to get a fire lighted—and there we dined on 'eggs and bacon, oat-cake, and whiskey; and changed 'and dried ourselves. The place was a mere knot of 'little outhouses, and in one of these there were fifty

Highland inn and inmates.

'highlanders *all drunk*. . . . Some were drovers, some 'pipers, and some workmen engaged to build a hunting-'lodge for Lord Breadalbane hard by, who had been 'driven in by stress of weather. One was a paper-hanger. 'He had come out three days before to paper the inn's 'best room, a chamber almost large enough to keep a 'Newfoundland dog in; and, from the first half hour 'after his arrival to that moment, had been hopelessly 'and irreclaimably drunk. They were lying about in all 'directions: on forms, on the ground, about a loft over-'head, round the turf-fire wrapped in plaids, on the 'tables, and under them. We paid our bill, thanked our 'host very heartily, gave some money to his children, 'and after an hour's rest came on again. At ten o'clock 'at night, we reached this place, and were overjoyed to

English comfort at Dalmally.

'find quite an English inn, with good beds (those we have 'slept on, yet, have always been of straw), and every 'possible comfort. We breakfasted this morning at half 'past ten, and at three go on to Inverary to dinner. I 'believe the very rough part of the journey is over, and 'I am really glad of it. Kate sends all kind of regards. I 'shall hope to find a letter from you at Inverary when the 'post reaches there, to-morrow. I wrote to Oban yesterday,

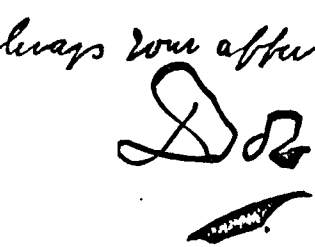
'desiring the post-office keeper to send any he might have 'for us, over to that place. Love to Mac.' THE HIGHLANDS: 1841.

One more letter, brief but overflowing at every word with his generous nature, must close the delightful series written from Scotland. It was dated from Inverary the day following his exciting adventure; promised me another from Melrose (which has unfortunately not been kept with the rest); and enclosed the invitation to a public dinner at Glasgow. 'I have returned for answer that I am on 'my way home, on pressing business connected with my 'weekly publication, and can't stop. But I have offered to 'come down any day in September or October, and accept 'the honour then. Now, I shall come and return per mail; 'and if this suits them, enter into a solemn league and 'covenant to come with me. *Do.* You must. I am sure 'you will . . . Till my next, and always afterwards, God 'bless you. I got your welcome letter this morning, and 'have read it a hundred times. What a pleasure it is. 'Kate's best regards. I am dying for Sunday, and wouldn't 'stop now for twenty dinners of twenty thousand each.

C. D. to J. F.

Dinner at Glasgow proposed.

Impatience for home.



'Will Lord John meet the parliament, or resign first?' I agreed to accompany him to Glasgow; but illness intercepted that celebration.

CHAPTER XVII.

AGAIN AT BROADSTAIRS.

1841.

BROADSTAIRS: 1841.

SOON after his return, at the opening of August, he went to Broadstairs; and the direction in which that last question shows his thoughts to have been busy, was that to which he turned his first holiday leisure. He sent me some rhymed squibs as his anonymous contribution to the fight the liberals were then making, against what was believed to be intended by the return to office of the tories; ignorant as we were how much wiser than his party the statesman then at the head of it was, or how greatly what we all most desired would be advanced by the very success that had been most disheartening. There will be no harm now in giving one of these pieces, which will sufficiently show the tone of all of them, and with what a hearty relish they were written. I doubt indeed if he ever enjoyed anything more than the power of thus taking part occasionally, unknown to outsiders, in the sharp conflict the press was waging at the time. 'By Jove how radical 'I am getting!' he wrote to me (13th August). 'I 'wax stronger and stronger in the true principles every 'day. I don't know whether it's the sea, or no, but so it

Peel and his party.

C. D. to J. F.

'is.' He would at times even talk, in moments of sudden indignation at the political outlook, of carrying off himself and his household gods, like Coriolanus, to a world elsewhere! 'Thank God there is a Van Diemen's-land. 'That's my comfort. Now, I wonder if I should make a 'good settler! I wonder, if I went to a new colony with 'my head, hands, legs, and health, I should force myself 'to the top of the social milk-pot and live upon the 'cream! What do you think? Upon my word I believe 'I should.'

BROADSTAIRS: 1841.

Thoughts of colonizing.

His political squibs during the tory interregnum comprised some capital subjects for pictures after the manner of Peter Pindar; but that which I select has no touch of personal satire in it, and he would himself, for that reason, have least objected to its revival. Thus ran his new version of 'The Fine Old English Gentleman, to be said 'or sung at all conservative dinners.'

Squib by C. D.

I'll sing you a new ballad, and I'll warrant it first-rate,
Of the days of that old gentleman who had that old estate;
When they spent the public money at a bountiful old rate
On ev'ry mistress, pimp, and scamp, at ev'ry noble gate,
In the fine old English Tory times;
Soon may they come again!

The good old laws were garnished well with gibbets, whips, and chains,
With fine old English penalties, and fine old English pains,
With rebel heads and seas of blood once hot in rebel veins;
For all these things were requisite to guard the rich old gains
Of the fine old English Tory times;
Soon may they come again!

This brave old code, like Argus, had a hundred watchful eyes,
And ev'ry English peasant had his good old English spies,

BROADSTAIRS: 1841.

To tempt his starving discontent with fine old English lies,
Then call the good old Yeomanry to stop his peevish cries,
In the fine old English Tory times;
Soon may they come again!

The fine old English tory times.

The good old times for cutting throats that cried out in their need,
The good old times for hunting men who held their fathers' creed,
The good old times when William Pitt, as all good men agreed,
Came down direct from Paradise at more than railroad speed. . . .
Oh the fine old English Tory times;
When will they come again!

Squib by C. D.

In those rare days, the press was seldom known to snarl or bark,
But sweetly sang of men in pow'r, like any tuneful lark;
Grave judges, too, to all their evil deeds were in the dark;
And not a man in twenty score knew how to make his mark.
Oh the fine old English Tory times;
Soon may they come again! . . . .

But Tolerance, though slow in flight, is strong-wing'd in the main;
That night must come on these fine days, in course of time was plain;
The pure old spirit struggled, but its struggles were in vain;
A nation's grip was on it, and it died in choaking pain,
With the fine old English Tory days,
All of the olden time.

The bright old day now dawns again; the cry runs through the land,
In England there shall be—dear bread! in Ireland—sword and brand!
And poverty, and ignorance, shall swell the rich and grand,
So, rally round the rulers with the gentle iron hand,
Of the fine old English Tory days;
Hail to the coming time!

Of matters in which he had been specially interested before he quitted London, one or two may properly be named. He had always sympathised, almost as strongly as Archbishop Whately did, with Doctor Elliotson's mesmeric investigations; and, reinforced as these were in the present year by the displays of a Belgian youth

Mesmerism.

whom another friend, Mr. Chauncy Hare Townshend, brought over to England, the subject, which to the last had an attraction for him, was for the time rather ardently followed up. The improvement during the last few years in the London prisons was another matter of eager and pleased enquiry with him; and he took frequent means of stating what in this respect had been done, since even the date when his *Sketches* were written, by two most efficient public officers at Clerkenwell and Tothill-fields, Mr. Chesterton and Lieutenant Tracey, whom the course of these enquiries turned into private friends. His last letter to me before he quitted town sufficiently explains itself. 'Slow 'rises worth by poverty deprest' was the thought in his mind at every part of his career, and he never for a moment was unmindful of the duty it imposed upon him. 'I subscribed for a couple of copies' (31st July) 'of this 'little book. I knew nothing of the man, but he wrote 'me a very modest letter of two lines, some weeks ago. I 'have been much affected by the little biography at the 'beginning, and I thought you would like to share the 'emotion it had raised in me. I wish we were all in Eden 'again—for the sake of these toiling creatures.'

LONDON: 1841.

Metropolitan prisons.

Book by a workman.

In the middle of August (Monday 16th) I had announcement that he was coming up for special purposes. 'I sit 'down to write to you without an atom of news to 'communicate. Yes I have—something that will surprise 'you, who are pent up in dark and dismal Lincoln's-'inn-fields. It is the brightest day you ever saw. The 'sun is sparkling on the water so that I can hardly 'bear to look at it. The tide is in, and the fishing

BROADSTAIRS. C. D. to J. F.

A day in August by the sea.

BROADSTAIRS: 1841.

C. D. to J. F.

'boats are dancing like mad. Upon the green-topped 'cliffs the corn is cut and piled in shocks; and thousands 'of butterflies are fluttering about, taking the bright 'little red flags at the mast-heads for flowers, and panting 'with delight accordingly. [Here the Inimitable, unable 'to resist the brilliancy out of doors, breaketh off, 'rusheth to the machines, and plungeth into the sea.

Edinburgh news.

'Returning, he proceedeth:] Jeffrey is just as he was 'when he wrote the letter I sent you. No better, and no 'worse. I had a letter from Napier on Saturday, urging 'the children's-labour subject upon me. But, as I hear from 'Southwood Smith that the report cannot be printed until 'the new parliament has sat at the least six weeks, it will 'be impossible to produce it before the January number. 'I shall be in town on Saturday morning and go straight

Another story in prospect.

'to you. A letter has come from little Hall begging that 'when I *do* come to town I will dine there, as they wish 'to talk about the new story. I have written to say that 'I will do so on Saturday, and we will go together; but I 'shall be by no means good company. . . . I have more 'than half a mind to start a bookseller of my own. I 'could; with good capital too, as you know; and ready 'to spend it. *G. Varden beware!*'

'Clock' discontents.

Small causes of displeasure had been growing out of the *Clock*, and were almost unavoidably incident to the position in which he found himself respecting it. Its discontinuance had become necessary, the strain upon himself being too great without the help from others which experience had shown to be impracticable; but I thought he had not met the difficulty wisely by undertaking, which already he

had done, to begin a new story so early as the following March. On his arrival therefore we decided on another plan, with which we went armed that Saturday afternoon to his publishers; and of which the result will be best told by himself. He had returned to Broadstairs the following morning, and next day (Monday the 23rd of August) he wrote to me in very enthusiastic terms of the share I had taken in what he calls 'the development on 'Saturday afternoon; when I thought Chapman very 'manly and sensible, Hall morally and physically feeble 'though perfectly well intentioned, and both the state-'ment and reception of the project quite triumphant. 'Didn't you think so too?' A fortnight later, Tuesday the 7th of September, the agreement was signed in my chambers, and its terms were to the effect following. The *Clock* was to cease with the close of *Barnaby Rudge*, the respective ownerships continuing as provided; and the new work in twenty numbers, similar to those of *Pickwick* and *Nickleby*, was not to begin until after an interval of twelve months, in November 1842. During its publication he was to receive £200 monthly, to be accounted as part of the expenses; for all which, and all risks incident, the publishers made themselves responsible, under conditions the same as in the *Clock* agreement; except that, out of the profits of each number, they were to have only a fourth, three fourths going to him, and this arrangement was to hold good until the termination of six months from the completed book, when, upon payment to him of a fourth of the value of all existing stock, they were to have half the future interest. During the twelve months'

BROADSTAIRS: 1841.

New adventure.

C. D. to J. F.

Agreement for it signed.

Terms.

BROADSTAIRS: 1841.

interval before the book began, he was to be paid £150 each month; but this was to be drawn from his three fourths of the profits, and in no way to interfere with the monthly payments of £200 while the publication was going on.* Such was the 'project,' excepting only a provision to be mentioned hereafter against the improbable event of the profits being inadequate to the repayment; and my only drawback from the satisfaction of my own share in it, arose from my fear of the use he was likely to make of the leisure it afforded him.

The book that proved to be *Chuzzlewit*.

That this fear was not illfounded appeared at the close of the next note I had from him. 'There's no news' (13th September) 'since my last. We are going to dine with 'Rogers to-day, and with Lady Essex, who is also here. 'Rogers is much pleased with Lord Ashley, who was offered 'by Peel a post in the government, but resolutely refused 'to take office unless Peel pledged himself to factory 'improvement. Peel "hadn't made up his mind"; and 'Lord Ashley was deaf to all other inducements, though 'they must have been very tempting. Much do I honour 'him for it. I am in an exquisitely lazy state, bathing, 'walking, reading, lying in the sun, doing everything but 'working. This frame of mind is superinduced by the 'prospect of rest, and the promising arrangements which I 'owe to you. I am still haunted by visions of America, 'night and day. To miss this opportunity would be a 'sad thing. Kate cries dismally if I mention the subject. 'But, God willing, I think it *must* be managed somehow!'

C. D. to J. F.

Peel and Lord Ashley.

Visions of America.

* 'M. was quite aghast last night (9th of September) at the brilliancy of 'the C. & H. arrangement: which is worth noting perhaps.'

CHAPTER XVIII.

EVE OF THE VISIT TO AMERICA.

1841.

BROADSTAIRS: 1841.

THE notion of America was in his mind, as we have seen, when he first projected the *Clock*, and a very hearty letter from Washington Irving about little Nell and the *Curiosity Shop*, expressing the delight with his writings and the yearnings to himself which had indeed been pouring in upon him for some time from every part of the States, had very strongly revived it. He answered Irving with more than his own warmth: unable to thank him enough for his cordial and generous praise, or to tell him what lasting gratification it had given. 'I wish I could find in your 'welcome letter,' he added, 'some hint of an intention to 'visit England. I should love to go with you, as I have 'gone, God knows how often, into Little-britain, and East-'cheap, and Green-arbour-court, and Westminster-abbey. '... It would gladden my heart to compare notes with you 'about all those delightful places and people that I used to 'walk about and dream of in the day time, when a very 'small and not-over-particularly-taken-care-of boy.' After interchange of these letters the subject was frequently revived; upon his return from Scotland it began to take

Greetings from America.

Reply to Washington Irving.

BROADSTAIRS: 1841.

shape as a thing that somehow or other, at no very distant date, *must be;* and at last, near the end of a letter filled with many unimportant things, the announcement, doubly underlined, came to me.

The decision once taken, he was in his usual fever until its difficulties were disposed of. The objections to separation from the children led at first to the notion of taking them, but this was as quickly abandoned; and what remained to be overcome yielded readily to the kind offices of Macready, the offer of whose home to the little ones during the time of absence, though not accepted to the full extent, gave yet the assurance needed to quiet natural apprehensions. All this, including an arrangement for publication of such notes as might occur to him on the journey, took but a few days; and I was reading in my chambers a letter he had written the previous day from Broadstairs, when a note from him reached me, written that morning in London, to tell me he was on his way to take share of my breakfast. He had come overland by Canterbury after posting his first letter; had seen Macready the previous night; and had completed some part of the arrangements. This mode of rapid procedure was characteristic of him at all similar times, and will appear in the few following extracts from his letters.

C. D. to J. F.

'Now' (19th September) 'to astonish you. After 'balancing, considering, and weighing the matter in every 'point of view, I HAVE MADE UP MY MIND (WITH GOD'S 'LEAVE) TO GO TO AMERICA—AND TO START AS SOON 'AFTER CHRISTMAS AS IT WILL BE SAFE TO GO.' Further information was promised immediately; and a request

Resolve to go to America.

followed, characteristic as any he could have added to his design of travelling so far away, that we should visit once more together the scenes of his boyhood. 'On the ninth 'of October we leave here. It's a Saturday. If it should 'be fine dry weather, or anything like it, will you meet us 'at Rochester, and stop there two or three days to see all 'the lions in the surrounding country? Think of this. '... If you'll arrange to come, I'll have the carriage down, 'and Topping; and, supposing news from Glasgow don't 'interfere with us, which I fervently hope it will not, I 'will ensure that we have much enjoyment.'

BROADSTAIRS: 1841.

Wish to revisit scenes of boyhood.

Three days later than that which announced his resolve, the subject was resumed. 'I wrote to Chapman 'and Hall asking them what they thought of it, and 'saying I meant to keep a note-book, and publish it for 'half a guinea or thereabouts, on my return. They 'instantly sent the warmest possible reply, and said they 'had taken it for granted I would go, and had been 'speaking of it only the day before. I have begged them 'to make every enquiry about the fares, cabins, berths, 'and times of sailing; and I shall make a great effort to 'take Kate *and* the children. In that case I shall try to 'let the house furnished, for six months (for I shall remain 'that time in America); and if I succeed, the rent will 'nearly pay the expenses out, and home. I have heard of 'family cabins at £100; and I think one of these is large 'enough to hold us all. A single fare, I think, is forty 'guineas. I fear I could not be happy if we had the 'Atlantic between us; but leaving them in New York 'while I ran off a thousand miles or so, would be quite

Proposed book about the States.

C. D. to J. F.

Arrangements for the journey.

BROADSTAIRS: 1841.

C. D. to J. F.

'another thing. If I can arrange all my plans before 'publishing the *Clock* address, I shall state therein that I 'am going: which will be no unimportant consideration, 'as affording the best possible reason for a long delay. 'How I am to get on without you for seven or eight 'months, I cannot, upon my soul, conceive. I dread to 'think of breaking up all our old happy habits, for so long 'a time. The advantages of going, however, appear by 'steady looking-at so great, that I have come to persuade 'myself it is a matter of imperative necessity. Kate weeps 'whenever it is spoken of. Washington Irving has got a 'nasty low fever. I heard from him a day or two ago.'

LONDON.

C. D. to J. F.

Impatience of suspense.

His next letter was the unexpected arrival which came by hand from Devonshire-terrace, when I thought him still by the sea. 'This is to give you notice that I am coming 'to breakfast with you this morning on my way to Broad-'stairs. I repeat it, sir,—on my way *to* Broadstairs. For, 'directly I got Macready's note yesterday I went to Can-'terbury, and came on by day-coach for the express purpose 'of talking with him; which I did between 11 and 12 last 'night in Clarence-terrace. The American preliminaries 'are necessarily startling, and, to a gentleman of my tem-'perament, destroy rest, sleep, appetite, and work, unless 'definitely arranged.* Macready has quite decided me in 'respect of time and so forth. The instant I have wrung 'a reluctant consent from Kate, I shall take our joint 'passage in the mail-packet for next January. I never 'loved my friends so well as now.' We had all dis-countenanced his first thought of taking the children

* See *ante*, p. 102.

and, upon this and other points, the experience of our friend who had himself travelled over the States was very valuable. His next letter, two days later from Broadstairs, informed me of the result of the Macready conference. 'Only a word. Kate is quite reconciled. 'Anne' (her maid) 'goes, and is amazingly cheerful and 'light of heart upon it. And I think, at present, that 'it's a greater trial to me than anybody. The 4th of 'January is the day. Macready's note to Kate was 'received and acted upon with a perfect response. 'She talks about it quite gaily, and is satisfied to have 'nobody in the house but Fred, of whom, as you know, 'they are all fond. He has got his promotion, and they 'give him the increased salary from the day on which the 'minute was made by Baring. I feel so amiable, so 'meek, so fond of people, so full of gratitudes and re-'liances, that I am like a sick man. And I am already 'counting the days between this and coming home again.'

BROADSTAIRS: 1841.

Resolve to leave the children.

C. D. to J. F.

Mrs. Dickens reconciled.

He was soon, alas! to be what he compared himself to. I met him at Rochester at the end of September, as arranged; we passed a day and night there; a day and night in Cobham and its neighbourhood, sleeping at the Leather-bottle; and a day and night at Gravesend. But we were hardly returned when some slight symptoms of bodily trouble took suddenly graver form, and an illness followed involving the necessity of surgical attendance. This, which with mention of the helpful courage displayed by him has before been alluded to,* put off necessarily the Glasgow dinner; and he had scarcely left his bedroom

ROCHESTER.

A grave illness.

* See *ante*, p. 219.

LONDON: 1841.

when a trouble arose near home which touched him to the depths of the greatest sorrow of his life, and, in the need of exerting himself for others, what remained of his own illness seemed to pass away.

Domestic griefs.

His wife's younger brother had died with the same unexpected suddenness that attended her younger sister's death; and the event had followed close upon the decease of Mrs. Hogarth's mother while on a visit to her daughter and Mr. Hogarth. 'As no steps had been taken towards

C. D. to J. F.

'the funeral,' he wrote (25th October) in reply to my offer of such service as I could render, 'I thought it 'best at once to bestir myself; and not even you could 'have saved my going to the cemetery. It is a great trial 'to me to give up Mary's grave; greater than I can pos-'sibly express. I thought of moving her to the catacombs 'and saying nothing about it; but then I remembered 'that the poor old lady is buried next her at her own 'desire, and could not find it in my heart, directly 'she is laid in the earth, to take her grandchild away.

The old sorrow.

'The desire to be buried next her is as strong upon me 'now, as it was five years ago; and I *know* (for I don't 'think there ever was love like that I bear her) that it 'will never diminish. I fear I can do nothing. Do you 'think I can? They would move her on Wednesday, if 'I resolved to have it done. I cannot bear the thought 'of being excluded from her dust; and yet I feel that her 'brothers and sisters, and her mother, have a better right 'than I to be placed beside her. It is but an idea. I 'neither think nor hope (God forbid) that our spirits 'would ever mingle *there*. I ought to get the better of

'it, but it is very hard. I never contemplated this—and 'coming so suddenly, and after being ill, it disturbs me 'more than it ought. It seems like losing her a second 'time . . .' 'No,' he wrote the morning after, 'I tried 'that. No, there is no ground on either side to be had. 'I must give it up. I shall drive over there, please God, 'on Thursday morning, before they get there; and look 'at her coffin.'

LONDON: 1841. C. D. to J. F.

He suffered more than he let any one perceive, and was obliged again to keep his room for some days. On the second of November he reported himself as progressing and ordered to Richmond, which, after a week or so, he changed to the White-hart at Windsor, where I passed some days with him, Mrs. Dickens, and her younger sister Georgina; but it was not till near the close of that month he could describe himself as thoroughly on his legs again, in the ordinary state on which he was wont to pride himself, bolt upright, staunch at the knees, a deep sleeper, a hearty eater, a good laugher; and nowhere a bit the worse, ''bating a little weakness now and then, and a 'slight nervousness at times.'

At Windsor.

Convalescent.

We had some days of much enjoyment at the end of the year, when Landor came up from Bath for the christening of his godson; and the 'Britannia,' which was to take the travellers from us in January, brought over to them in December all sorts of cordialities, anticipations, and stretchings-forth of palms, in token of the welcome awaiting them. On new-year's-eve they dined with me, and I with them on new-year's-day; when (his house having been taken for the period of his absence by

Christening of Walter.

LONDON: 1841.

General Sir John Wilson) we sealed up his wine cellar, after opening therein some sparkling Moselle in honour of the ceremony, and drinking it then and there to his happy return. Next morning (it was a Sunday) I accompanied them to Liverpool, Maclise having been suddenly stayed by his mother's death; the intervening day and its occupations have been humorously sketched in his American book; and on the fourth they sailed. I never saw the Britannia after I stepped from her deck back to the small steamer that had taken us to her. 'How little I thought' (were the last lines of his first American letter), 'the 'first time you mounted the shapeless coat, that I should 'have such a sad association with its back as when I saw 'it by the paddle-box of that small steamer.'

Adieus.

CHAPTER XIX.

FIRST IMPRESSIONS OF AMERICA.

1842.

THE first lines of that letter were written as soon as he got sight of earth again, from the banks of Newfoundland, on Monday the seventeenth of January, the fourteenth day from their departure: even then so far from Halifax that they could not expect to make it before Wednesday night, or to reach Boston until Saturday or Sunday. They had not been fortunate in the passage. During the whole voyage, the weather had been unprecedentedly bad, the wind for the most part dead against them, the wet intolerable, the sea horribly disturbed, the days dark, and the nights fearful. On the previous Monday night it had blown a hurricane, beginning at five in the afternoon and raging all night. His description of the storm is published, and the peculiarities of a steamer's behaviour in such circumstances are hit off as if he had been all his life a sailor. Any but so extraordinary an observer would have described a steamer in a storm as he would have described a sailing-ship in a storm. But any description of the latter would be as inapplicable to my friend's account of the other as

BANKS OF NEWFOUNDLAND: 1842.

Rough passage.

A steamer in a storm.

NEWFOUNDLAND: 1842.

C. D. to J. F.

Resigned to the worst.

the ways of a jackass to those of a mad bull. In the letter from which it was taken, however, there were some things addressed to myself alone. 'For two or three 'hours we gave it up as a lost thing; and with many 'thoughts of you, and the children, and those others who 'are dearest to us, waited quietly for the worst. I never 'expected to see the day again, and resigned myself to 'God as well as I could. It was a great comfort to think 'of the earnest and devoted friends we had left behind, 'and to know that the darlings would not want.'

This was not the exaggerated apprehension of a landsman merely. The head engineer, who had been in one or other of the Cunard vessels since they began running, had never seen such stress of weather; and I heard Captain Hewitt himself say afterwards that nothing but a steamer, and one of that strength, could have kept her course and stood it out. A sailing vessel must have beaten off and driven where she could; while through all the fury of that gale they actually made fifty-four miles headlong through the tempest, straight on end, not varying their track in the least.

Right onward.

He stood out against sickness only for the day following that on which they sailed. For the three following days he kept his bed; miserable enough; and had not, until the eighth day of the voyage, six days before the date of his letter, been able to get to work at the dinner table. What he then observed of his fellow-travellers, and had to tell of their life on board, has been set forth in his *Notes* with delightful humour; but in its first freshness I received it in this letter, and some

Of himself and fellow-travellers.

whimsical passages, then suppressed, there will be no harm in printing now.

NEWFOUNDLAND: 1842.

C. D. to J. F.

'We have 86 passengers; and such a strange collection 'of beasts never was got together upon the sea, since the 'days of the Ark. I have never been in the saloon since 'the first day; the noise, the smell, and the closeness being 'quite intolerable. I have only been on deck *once!*— 'and then I was surprised and disappointed at the small- 'ness of the panorama. The sea, running as it does and 'has done, is very stupendous, and viewed from the air or 'some great height would be grand no doubt. But seen 'from the wet and rolling decks, in this weather and these 'circumstances, it only impresses one giddily and pain- 'fully. I was very glad to turn away, and come below 'again.

The Atlantic from deck.

'I have established myself, from the first, in the ladies' 'cabin—you remember it? I'll describe its other occu- 'pants, and our way of passing the time, to you.

'First, for the occupants. Kate, and I, and Anne— 'when she is out of bed, which is not often. A queer 'little Scotch body, a Mrs P—,* whose husband is a silver- 'smith in New York. He married her at Glasgow three 'years ago, and bolted the day after the wedding; being '(which he had not told her) heavily in debt. Since then 'she has been living with her mother; and she is now 'going out under the protection of a male cousin, to give

The ladies' cabin.

* The initials used here are in no case those of the real names, being employed in every case for the express purpose of disguising the names. Generally the remark is applicable to all initials used in the letters printed in the course of this work.

NEWFOUNDLAND: 1842.

C. D. to J. F.

'him a year's trial. If she is not comfortable at the 'expiration of that time, she means to go back to Scotland 'again. A Mrs. B—, about 20 years old, whose husband 'is on board with her. He is a young Englishman domi- 'ciled in New York, and by trade (as well as I can make 'out) a woollen-draper. They have been married a 'fortnight. A Mr. and Mrs. C—, marvellously fond of 'each other, complete the catalogue. Mrs. C— I have 'settled, is a publican's daughter, and Mr. C— is running 'away with her, the till, the time-piece off the bar mantel- 'shelf, the mother's gold watch from the pocket at the 'head of the bed; and other miscellaneous property. The 'women are all pretty; unusually pretty. I never saw 'such good faces together, anywhere.'

Occupants of ladies' cabin.

Their 'way of passing the time' will be found in the *Notes* much as it was written to me; except that there was one point connected with the card-playing which he feared might overtax the credulity of his readers, but which he protested had occurred more than once. 'Apropos of 'rolling, I have forgotten to mention that in playing whist 'we are obliged to put the tricks in our pockets, to keep 'them from disappearing altogether; and that five or six 'times in the course of every rubber we are all flung from 'our seats, roll out at different doors, and keep on rolling 'until we are picked up by stewards. This has become 'such a matter of course, that we go through it with 'perfect gravity; and when we are bolstered up on our 'sofas again, resume our conversation or our game at the 'point where it was interrupted.' The news that excited them from day to day, too, of which little more than a

Card-playing on the Atlantic.

hint appears in the *Notes*, is worth giving as originally written. NEWFOUNDLAND: 1842.

'As for news, we have more of that than you would 'think for. One man lost fourteen pounds at vingt-un in 'the saloon yesterday, or another got drunk before dinner 'was over, or another was blinded with lobster sauce spilt 'over him by the steward, or another had a fall on deck 'and fainted. The ship's cook was drunk yesterday morn- 'ing (having got at some salt-water-damaged whiskey), 'and the captain ordered the boatswain to play upon him 'with the hose of the fire engine until he roared for mercy '—which he didn't get; for he was sentenced to look out, 'for four hours at a stretch for four nights running, 'without a great coat, and to have his grog stopped. 'Four dozen plates were broken at dinner. One steward 'fell down the cabin-stairs with a round of beef, and 'injured his foot severely. Another steward fell down 'after him, and cut his eye open. The baker's taken ill: 'so is the pastry-cook. A new man, sick to death, has 'been required to fill the place of the latter officer, and 'has been dragged out of bed and propped up in a little 'house upon deck, between two casks, and ordered (the 'captain standing over him) to make and roll out pie- 'crust; which he protests, with tears in his eyes, it is 'death to him in his bilious state to look at. Twelve 'dozen of bottled porter has got loose upon deck, and the 'bottles are rolling about distractedly, over-head. Lord 'Mulgrave (a handsome fellow, by the bye, to look at, and 'nothing but a good 'un to go) laid a wager with twenty- 'five other men last night, whose berths, like his, are in

C. D. to J. F.

Ship-news.

Cook in disgrace.

A cook malgré lui.

A wager.

NEWFOUNDLAND: 1842.

C. D. to J. F.

'the fore-cabin, which can only be got at by crossing the 'deck, that he would reach his cabin first. Watches were 'set by the captain's, and they sallied forth, wrapped up 'in coats and storm caps. The sea broke over the ship so 'violently, that they were *five and twenty minutes* holding 'on by the handrail at the starboard paddle-box, drenched 'to the skin by every wave, and not daring to go on or 'come back, lest they should be washed overboard. News! 'A dozen murders in town wouldn't interest us half as 'much.'

Nevertheless their excitements were not over. At the very end of the voyage came an incident very lightly touched in the *Notes*, but more freely told to me under

Halifax harbour.

date of the 21st January. 'We were running into Halifax- 'harbour on Wednesday night, with little wind and a bright 'moon; had made the light at its outer entrance, and 'given the ship in charge to the pilot; were playing our 'rubber, all in good spirits (for it had been comparatively 'smooth for some days, with tolerably dry decks and other

Ship aground.

'unusual comforts), when suddenly the ship STRUCK! A 'rush upon deck followed of course. The men (I mean 'the crew! think of this) were kicking off their shoes and 'throwing off their jackets preparatory to swimming 'ashore; the pilot was beside himself; the passengers 'dismayed; and everything in the most intolerable con- 'fusion and hurry. Breakers were roaring ahead; the land 'within a couple of hundred yards; and the vessel driving 'upon the surf, although her paddles were worked back- 'wards, and everything done to stay her course. It is not 'the custom of steamers, it seems, to have an anchor

'ready. An accident occurred in getting ours over the 'side; and for half an hour we were throwing up rockets, 'burning blue lights, and firing signals of distress, all of 'which remained unanswered, though we were so close to 'the shore that we could see the waving branches of the 'trees. All this time, as we veered about, a man was 'heaving the lead every two minutes; the depths of water 'constantly decreasing; and nobody self-possessed but 'Hewitt. They let go the anchor at last, got out a boat, 'and sent her ashore with the fourth officer, the pilot, and 'four men aboard, to try and find out where we were. 'The pilot had no idea; but Hewitt put his little finger 'upon a certain part of the chart, and was as confident of 'the exact spot (though he had never been there in his 'life) as if he had lived there from infancy. The boat's 'return about an hour afterwards proved him to be quite 'right. We had got into a place called the Eastern-'passage, in a sudden fog and through the pilot's folly. 'We had struck upon a mud-bank, and driven into a 'perfect little pond, surrounded by banks and rocks and 'shoals of all kinds: the only safe speck in the place. 'Eased by this report, and the assurance that the tide 'was past the ebb, we turned in at three o'clock in the 'morning, to lie there all night.'

HALIFAX HARBOUR: 1842.

C. D. to J. F.

Signals of distress.

Captain Hewitt.

The next day's landing at Halifax, and delivery of the mails, are sketched in the *Notes;* but not his personal part in what followed. 'Then, sir, comes a breathless man 'who has been already into the ship and out again, shout-'ing my name as he tears along. I stop, arm in arm with 'the little doctor whom I have taken ashore for oysters.

HALIFAX.

Speaker of house of assembly.

HALIFAX: 1842.

C. D. to J. F.

'The breathless man introduces himself as The Speaker 'of the house of assembly; *will* drag me away to his 'house; and *will* have a carriage and his wife sent down 'for Kate, who is laid up with a hideously swoln face. 'Then he drags me up to the Governor's house (Lord 'Falkland is the governor), and then Heaven knows 'where; concluding with both houses of parliament, 'which happen to meet for the session that very day, and 'are opened by a mock speech from the throne delivered 'by the governor, with one of Lord Grey's sons for his

Ovation in Halifax.

'aide-de-camp, and a great host of officers about him. I 'wish you could have seen the crowds cheering the 'inimitable * in the streets. I wish you could have seen 'judges, law-officers, bishops, and law-makers welcoming 'the inimitable. I wish you could have seen the inimitable 'shown to a great elbow-chair by the Speaker's throne, and

In the house of assembly.

'sitting alone in the middle of the floor of the house of 'commons, the observed of all observers, listening with 'exemplary gravity to the queerest speaking possible, and 'breaking in spite of himself into a smile as he thought 'of this commencement to the Thousand and One stories 'in reserve for home and Lincoln's-inn fields and Jack 'Straw's-castle.—Ah, Forster! when I *do* come back 'again!——'

BOSTON.

He resumed his letter at Tremont-house on Saturday the 28th of January, having reached Boston that day week at five in the afternoon; and as his first American experience is very lightly glanced at in the *Notes*, a fuller

* This word, applied to him by his old master, Mr. Giles (*ante*, p. 13), was for a long time the epithet we called him by.

picture will perhaps be welcome. 'As the Cunard boats 'have a wharf of their own at the custom-house, and 'that a narrow one, we were a long time (an hour at least) 'working in. I was standing in full fig on the paddle-box 'beside the captain, staring about me, when suddenly, 'long before we were moored to the wharf, a dozen men 'came leaping on board at the peril of their lives, with 'great bundles of newspapers under their arms; worsted 'comforters (very much the worse for wear) round their 'necks; and so forth. "Aha!" says I, "this is like our '"London-bridge": believing of course that these visitors 'were news-boys. But what do you think of their being 'EDITORS? And what do you think of their tearing 'violently up to the and beginning to shake hands like 'madmen? Oh! If you could have seen how I wrung 'their wrists! And if you could but know how I hated 'one man in very dirty gaiters, and with very protruding 'upper teeth, who said to all comers after him, "So you've '"been introduced to our friend Dickens—eh?" There 'was one among them, though, who really was of use; a 'Doctor S, editor of the ——. He ran off here (two 'miles at least), and ordered rooms and dinner. And in 'course of time Kate, and I, and Lord Mulgrave (who 'was going back to his regiment at Montreal on 'Monday, and had agreed to live with us in the mean- 'while) sat down in a spacious and handsome room to 'a very handsome dinner, 'bating peculiarities of putting 'on table, and had forgotten the ship entirely. A Mr. 'Alexander, to whom I had written from England pro- 'mising to sit for a portrait, was on board directly

BOSTON: 1842. C. D. to J. F.

Incursion of editors.

At Tremont-house.

BOSTON: 1842.

C. D. to J. F.

'we touched the land, and brought us here in his car-
'riage. Then, after sending a present of most beautiful
'flowers, he left us to ourselves, and we thanked him
'for it.'

What further he had to say of that week's experience, finds its first public utterance here. 'How can I tell you,' he continues, 'what has happened since that first day?

The welcome.

'How can I give you the faintest notion of my reception
'here; of the crowds that pour in and out the whole day;
'of the people that line the streets when I go out; of the
'cheering when I went to the theatre; of the copies of
'verses, letters of congratulation, welcomes of all kinds,
'balls, dinners, assemblies without end? There is to be

Proposed dinners and balls.

'a public dinner to me here in Boston, next Tuesday, and
'great dissatisfaction has been given to the many by the
'high price (three pounds sterling each) of the tickets.
'There is to be a ball next Monday week at New York,
'and 150 names appear on the list of the committee.
'There is to be a dinner in the same place, in the same
'week, to which I have had an invitation with every
'known name in America appended to it. But what
'can I tell you about any of these things which will give
'you the slightest notion of the enthusiastic greeting they
'give me, or the cry that runs through the whole country!

Deputations.

'I have had deputations from the Far West, who have
'come from more than two thousand miles distance: from
'the lakes, the rivers, the back-woods, the log-houses, the
'cities, factories, villages, and towns. Authorities from
'nearly all the States have written to me. I have heard
'from the universities, congress, senate, and bodies, public

'and private, of every sort and kind. "It is no nonsense, Boston: 1842.
'"and no common feeling," wrote Dr. Channing to me C. D. to J. F.
'yesterday. "It is all heart. There never was, and never
'"will be, such a triumph." And it is a good thing, is it Dr. Channing to C. D.
'not, ... to find those fancies it has given me and you
'the greatest satisfaction to think of, at the core of it all?
'It makes my heart quieter, and me a more retiring,
'sober, tranquil man to watch the effect of those thoughts
'in all this noise and hurry, even than if I sat, pen in
'hand, to put them down for the first time. I feel, in the Effect upon himself.
'best aspects of this welcome, something of the presence
'and influence of that spirit which directs my life, and
'through a heavy sorrow has pointed upwards with un-
'changing finger for more than four years past. And if
'I know my heart, not twenty times this praise would
'move me to an act of folly.' ....

There were but two days more before the post left for England, and the close of this part of his letter sketched the engagements that awaited him on leaving Boston. Engagements.

'We leave here next Saturday. We go to a place called
'Worcester,' about 75 miles off, to the house of the
'governor of this place; and stay with him all Sunday.
'On Monday we go on by railroad about 50 miles further
'to a town called Springfield, where I am met by a
'"reception committee," from Hartford 20 miles further,
'and carried on by the multitude: I am sure I don't know
'how, but I shouldn't wonder if they appear with a
'triumphal car. On Wednesday I have a public dinner Public appearances.
'there. On Friday I shall be obliged to present myself
'in public again, at a place called Newhaven, about 30

Boston: 1842. C. D. to J. F.

'miles further. On Saturday evening I hope to be at 'New York; and there I shall stay ten days or a fortnight. 'You will suppose that I have enough to do. I am sitting 'for a portrait and for a bust. I have the correspondence 'of a secretary of state, and the engagements of a fashion-

A secretary engaged.

'able physician. I have a secretary whom I take on with 'me. He is a young man of the name of Q; was strongly 'recommended to me; is most modest, obliging, silent, 'and willing; and does his work *well*. He boards and 'lodges at my expense when we travel; and his salary 'is ten dollars per month—about two pounds five of our 'English money. There will be dinners and balls at 'Washington, Philadelphia, Baltimore, and I believe 'everywhere. In Canada, I have promised to *play* at the 'theatre with the officers, for the benefit of a charity. 'We are already weary, at times, past all expression; and 'I finish this by means of a pious fraud. We were 'engaged to a party, and have written to say we are both 'desperately ill. ..... "Well," I can fancy you saying,

Bostonians.

'" but about his impressions of Boston and the Americans?" '—Of the latter, I will not say a word until I have seen 'more of them, and have gone into the interior. I will 'only say, now, that we have never yet been required to 'dine at a table d'hôte; that, thus far, our rooms are as 'much our own here, as they would be at the Clarendon;

Phrases.

'that but for an odd phrase now and then—such as *Snap 'of cold weather;* a *tongue-y man* for a talkative fellow; '*Possible?* as a solitary interrogation; and *Yes?* for 'indeed—I should have marked, so far, no difference 'whatever between the parties here and those I have left

'behind. The women are very beautiful, but they soon 'fade; the general breeding is neither stiff nor forward; 'the good nature, universal. If you ask the way to a 'place—of some common waterside man, who don't know 'you from Adam—he turns and goes with you. Universal 'deference is paid to ladies; and they walk about at all 'seasons, wholly unprotected. . . . This hotel is a trifle 'smaller than Finsbury-square; and is made so infernally 'hot (I use the expression advisedly) by means of a 'furnace with pipes running through the passages, that 'we can hardly bear it. There are no curtains to the 'beds, or to the bedroom windows. I am told there 'never are, hardly, all through America. The bed- 'rooms are indeed very bare of furniture. Ours is 'nearly as large as your great room, and has a wardrobe 'in it of painted wood not larger (I appeal to K) than 'an English watch box. I slept in this room for two 'nights, quite satisfied with the belief that it was a 'shower bath.'

BOSTON: 1842.

C. D. to J. F.

General characteristics.

Hotels.

Bedrooms.

The last addition made to this letter, from which many vividest pages of the *Notes* (among them the bright quaint picture of Boston streets) were taken with small alteration, bore date the 29th of January. 'I hardly know 'what to add to all this long and unconnected history. 'Dana, the author of that *Two Years before the Mast*,' (a book which I had praised much to him, thinking it like De Foe) 'is a very nice fellow indeed; and in appearance 'not at all the man you would expect. He is short, mild- 'looking, and has a care-worn face. His father is exactly 'like George Cruikshank after a night's jollity—only

Personal notices.

BOSTON: 1842.

C. D. to J. F.

'shorter. The professors at the Cambridge university, 'Longfellow, Felton, Jared Sparks, are noble fellows. So 'is Kenyon's friend, Ticknor. Bancroft is a famous man; 'a straightforward, manly, earnest heart; and talks much 'of you, which is a great comfort. Doctor Channing I will 'tell you more of, after I have breakfasted alone with him 'next Wednesday. . . . Sumner is of great service to me. '. . . The president of the Senate here presides at my 'dinner on Tuesday. Lord Mulgrave lingered with us 'till last Tuesday (we had our little captain to dinner 'on the Monday), and then went on to Canada. Kate is 'quite well, and so is Anne, whose smartness surpasses 'belief. They yearn for home, and so do I.

'Of course you will not see in the papers any true 'account of our voyage, for they keep the dangers of the 'passage, when there are any, very quiet. I observed so

Perils of steamers.

'many perils peculiar to steamers that I am still undecided 'whether we shall not return by one of the New York 'liners. On the night of the storm, I was wondering 'within myself where we should be, if the chimney were 'blown overboard: in which case, it needs no great obser- 'vation to discover that the vessel must be instantly on 'fire from stem to stern. When I went on deck next day, 'I saw that it was held up by a perfect forest of chains 'and ropes, which had been rigged in the night. Hewitt 'told me (when we were on shore, not before) that they 'had men lashed, hoisted up, and swinging there, all 'through the gale, getting these stays about it. This is 'not agreeable—is it?'

A home thought.

'I wonder whether you will remember that next

'Tuesday is my birthday! This letter will leave here 'that morning. BOSTON: 1842.

C. D. to J. F.

'On looking back through these sheets, I am astonished 'to find how little I have told you, and how much I have, 'even now, in store which shall be yours by word of 'mouth. The American poor, the American factories, 'the institutions of all kinds—I have a book, already. 'There is no man in this town, or in this State of New 'England, who has not a blazing fire and a meat dinner 'every day of his life. A flaming sword in the air would 'not attract so much attention as a beggar in the streets. Beggary. 'There are no charity uniforms, no wearisome repetition 'of the same dull ugly dress, in that blind school.* All Charity. 'are attired after their own tastes, and every boy and girl 'has his or her individuality as distinct and unimpaired 'as you would find it in their own homes. At the 'theatres, all the ladies sit in the fronts of the boxes. 'The gallery are as quiet as the dress circle at dear 'Drury-lane. A man with seven heads would be no 'sight at all, compared with one who couldn't read and Education. 'write.

'I won't speak (I say "speak"! I wish I could) about 'the dear precious children, because I know how much we 'shall hear about them when we receive those letters from 'home for which we long so ardently.'

Unmistakeably to be seen, in this earliest of his letters, is the quite fresh and unalloyed impression first received by How first impressed.

* His descriptions of this school, and of the case of Laura Bridgeman, will be found in the *Notes*; and have therefore been, of course, omitted here.

BOSTON: 1842.

him at this memorable visit; and it is due, as well to himself as to the great country which welcomed him, that this should be considered independently of any modification it afterwards underwent. Of the fervency and universality of the welcome there could indeed be no doubt, and as little that it sprang from feelings honorable both to giver and receiver. The sources of Dickens's popularity in England were in truth multiplied many-fold in America. The hearty, cordial, and humane side of his genius, had fascinated them quite as much; but there was also something beyond this. The cheerful temper that had given new beauty to the commonest forms of life, the abounding humour which had added largely to all innocent enjoyment, the honorable and in those days rare distinction of America which left no home in the Union inaccessible to such advantages, had made Dickens the object everywhere of grateful admiration, for the most part of personal affection. But even this was not all. I do not say it either to lessen or to increase the value of the tribute, but to express simply what it was; and there cannot be a question that the young English author, whom by his language they claimed equally for their own, was almost universally regarded by the Americans as a kind of embodied protest against what they believed to be worst in the institutions of England, depressing and overshadowing in a social sense, and adverse to purely intellectual influences. In all the papers of every grade in the Union, of which many were sent to me at the time, the feeling of triumph over the mother-country in this particular is everywhere predominant. You worship titles,

Reasons for the greeting.

Why so popular.

What was welcomed in C. D.

they said, and military heroes, and millionaires, and we of the New World want to show you, by extending the kind of homage that the Old World reserves for kings and conquerors, to a young man with nothing to distinguish him but his heart and his genius, what it is we think in these parts worthier of honour, than birth, or wealth, a title, or a sword. Well, there was something in this too, apart from a mere crowing over the mother-country. The Americans had honestly more than a common share in the triumphs of a genius, which in more than one sense had made the deserts and wildernesses of life to blossom like the rose. They were entitled to select for a welcome, as emphatic as they might please to render it, the writer who pre-eminently in his generation had busied himself to 'detect and save,' in human creatures, such sparks of virtue as misery or vice had not availed to extinguish; to discover what is beautiful and comely, under what commonly passes for the ungainly and the deformed; to draw happiness and hopefulness from despair itself; and, above all, so to have made known to his own countrymen the wants and sufferings of the poor, the ignorant, and the neglected, that they could be left in absolute neglect no more. 'A triumph has been prepared 'for him,' wrote Mr. Ticknor to our dear friend Kenyon, 'in 'which the whole country will join. He will have a pro- 'gress through the States unequalled since Lafayette's.' Daniel Webster told the Americans that Dickens had done more already to ameliorate the condition of the English poor than all the statesmen Great Britain had sent into parliament. His sympathies are such, exclaimed

Boston: 1842.

Old world and New world.

Ticknor to Kenyon.

Webster as to C. D.

BOSTON: 1842.

Doctor Channing, as to recommend him in an especial manner to us. He seeks out that class, in order to benefit them, with whom American institutions and laws sympathize most strongly; and it is in the passions, sufferings, and virtues of the mass that he has found his subjects of most thrilling interest. 'He shows that life in its rudest 'form may wear a tragic grandeur; that amidst follies and 'excesses, provoking laughter or scorn, the moral feelings 'do not wholly die; and that the haunts of the blackest 'crime are sometimes lighted up by the presence and 'influence of the noblest souls. His pictures have a 'tendency to awaken sympathy with our race, and to 'change the unfeeling indifference which has prevailed 'towards the depressed multitude, into a sorrowful and 'indignant sensibility to their wrongs and woes.'

Channing as to C. D.

Whatever may be the turn which we are to see the welcome take, by dissatisfaction that arose on both sides, it is well that we should thus understand what in its first manifestations was honorable to both. Dickens had his disappointments, and the Americans had theirs; but what was really genuine in the first enthusiasm remained without grave alloy from either; and the letters, as I proceed to give them, will so naturally explain and illustrate the mis-understanding as to require little further comment. I am happy to be able here to place on record facsimiles of the invitations to the public entertainments in New York which reached him before he quitted Boston. The mere signatures suffice to show how universal the welcome was from that great city of the Union.

Subsequent disappointments.

To Charles Dickens Esq^r

Liverpool 24 January 1842

Sir.

The undersigned for themselves & in behalf of a wide circle of their fellow citizens, desire to congratulate you on your safe arrival, & tender to you a sincere & hearty welcome.

We personally unknown - still can safely assure you, that you will find yourself no Stranger among us. — Those Genius with which you have been so signally gifted - and which your pen has directed with such consummate skill in delineating every passion & sympathy & peculiarity of the human mind - has become to you a passport to all hearts - which your unaffected

[illegible] conversations, and apt illustrations — pointing at every turn, a practical spiritual morality. — Have pleasure in your name as familiar to us as household words.

In testimony of our respect & high regard and as a slight, tho' thankful, tribute to your genius. We request that you will name as early a day as may suit your convenience, to meet us in this City at a public dinner — which, as elsewhere, it will be our pride & pleasure to express our gratitude to you for the many such intellectual feasts, you have so often spread before us.

We are, my dear Sir, Cordially your friends

Washington Irving
Wm. H. Prescott
Jas. K. Paulding
Geo. Bancroft
Jno. C. Spencer
Thos. Ewbank
Jno. Duer.
Wm. C. Bryant
Robt. C. Winthrop
Jas. Lenox
Chas. A. Davis
Jno. A. King
Geo. Folsom
Luther Bradish
Jno. Jay
Wm. Kent
Jno. W. Francis
Jno. Delafield
Jno. Pintard
Jno. Ward
Jno. Wells
Jno. Anthon
Jno. Haggerty
Jno. Romeyn Brodhead
Jno. Watts
Jno. Van Buren
Jno. Adams
Jno. Duer
Jno. Jacob Astor
Jno. Jay
Jno. Jay
Jno. Jay

Theodore Sedgwick
Wm Law Robinson
D. L. Kennedy
James G. King
Henry Brevoort
Charles March
Cornelius Vanderbilt
Prescott Hall
Jno. Gallatin
John A. King
William Kent
David C. Colden
G. G. Howland
James I. Jones
Jacob H. Lloyd
M. C. Paterson

C. King
W. C. Bryant
W. B. Astor
Gaetano Lestonyton
Hamilton Fish
Jas. D. Ogden
M. H. Grinnell
W. H. Aspinwall
Edward Curtis
Edward Jones
Wm. C. Rhinelander
Abm. Schermerhorn
Wm. Backhouse
F. F. Freeman Walker
C. W. Kay & Co.

New York January 26. 1842

Sir

The citizens of New York having received the agreeable intelligence of your arrival in the United States, & appreciating the value of your labors in the Cause of Humanity, & the eminently successful exercise of your literary Talents, are ambitious to be among the foremost in tendering to You & your Lady the Hearty Welcome which they are persuaded is in reserve for You in all parts of our Country. With this object in view we have been appointed a Committee in behalf of a large meeting of Gentlemen Convened for the purpose, to request your attendance at a public ball to be given

To Charles Dickens Esq.

in this city.

Mr Cocden one of our number, will have the honor of presenting this invitation and is charged with the agreeable duty of presenting their congratulations on your arrival. We shall expect from Him, your kind acceptance of this invitation & your designation of the day when it may suit your convenience to attend.

We are Sir.

With great respect

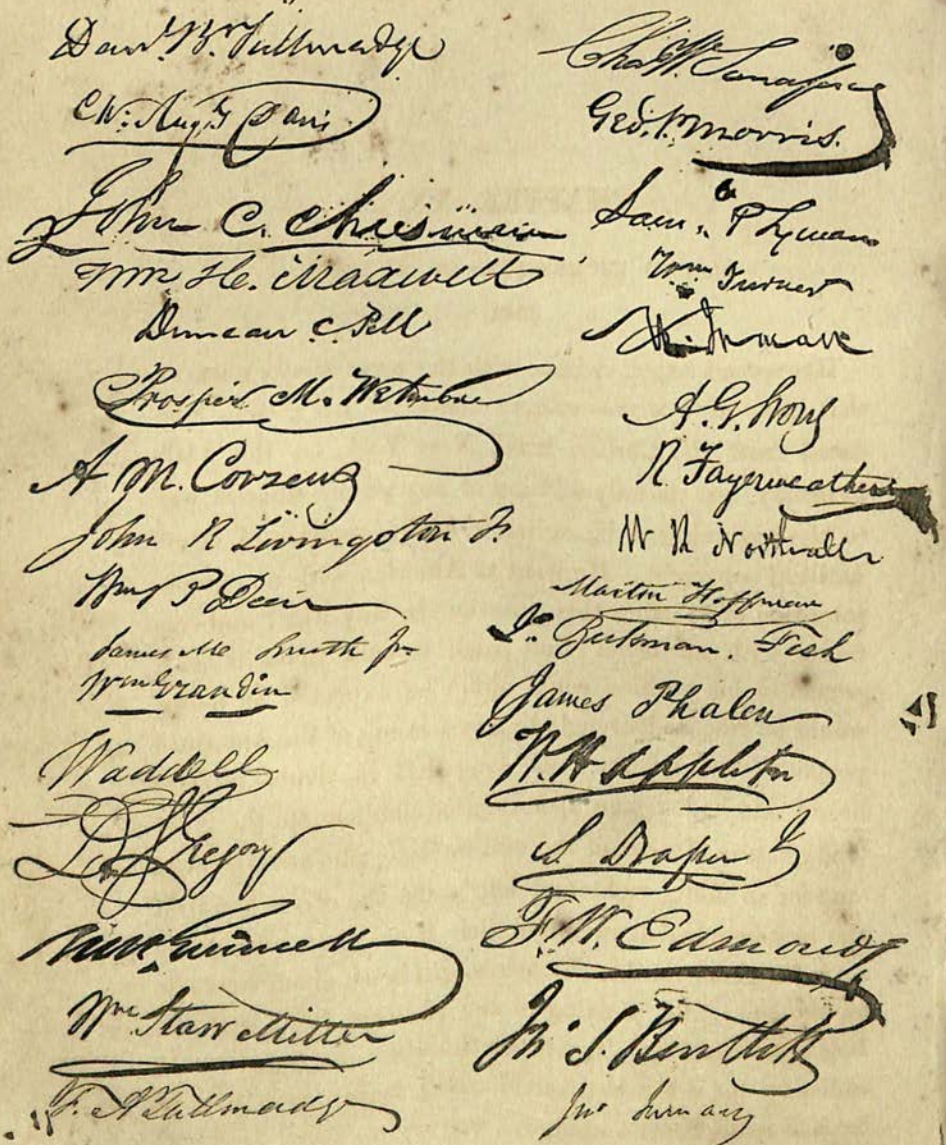
Yr Obt Servants

W. T. Mott Jr.

Philip Stone

John W. Francis.

J. W. Edmonds



CHAPTER XX.

SECOND IMPRESSIONS OF AMERICA.

1842.

NEW YORK: 1842.

Second letter.

HIS second letter, radiant with the same kindly warmth that gave always pre-eminent charm to his genius, was dated from the Carlton-hotel, New York, on the 14th February, but its only allusion of any public interest was to the beginning of his agitation of the question of international copyright. He went to America with no express intention of starting this question in any way; and certainly with no belief that such remark upon it as a person in his position could alone be expected to make, would be resented strongly by any sections of the American people. But he was not long left in doubt on this head. He had spoken upon it twice publicly, 'to the great 'indignation of some of the editors here, who are attacking 'me for so doing, right and left.' On the other hand all the best men had assured him, that, if only at once followed up in England, the blow struck might bring about a change in the law; and, yielding to the pleasant hope that the best men could be a match for the worst, he urged me to enlist on his side what force I could, and in particular, as he had made Scott's claim his war cry, to bring Lockhart

International copyright.

NEW YORK: 1842. into the field. I could not do much, but I did what I could.

Three days later he began another letter; and, as this will be entirely new to the reader, I shall print it as it reached me, with only such omission of matter concerning myself as I think it my duty, however reluctantly, to make throughout these extracts. There was nothing in its personal details, or in those relating to international copyright, available for his *Notes;* from which they were excluded by the two rules he observed in that book, the first to be altogether silent as to the copyright discussion, and the second to abstain from all mention of individuals. But there can be no harm here in violating either rule, for, as Sydney Smith said with his humorous sadness, 'We are all dead now.'

Third letter.

C. D. to J. F.

'Carlton-house, New York: Thursday, February Seven-'teenth, 1842. . . . . As there is a sailing-packet 'from here to England to-morrow which is warranted (by 'the owners) to be a marvellous fast sailer, and as it 'appears most probable that she will reach home (I write 'the word with a pang) before the Cunard steamer of next 'month, I indite this letter. And lest this letter should 'reach you before another letter which I dispatched from 'here last Monday, let me say in the first place that I *did* 'dispatch a brief epistle to you on that day, together with 'a newspaper, and a pamphlet touching the Boz ball; and 'that I put in the post-office at Boston another newspaper 'for you containing an account of the dinner, which was 'just about to come off, you remember, when I wrote to 'you from that city.

NEW YORK: 1842.

C. D. to J. F.

'It was a most superb affair; and the speaking *admir-* 'able. Indeed the general talent for public speaking 'here, is one of the most striking of the things that 'force themselves upon an Englishman's notice. As 'every man looks on to being a member of Congress, 'every man prepares himself for it; and the result is quite 'surprising. You will observe one odd custom—the 'drinking of sentiments. It is quite extinct with us, but 'here everybody is expected to be prepared with an 'epigram as a matter of course.

The dinner at Boston.

'We left Boston on the fifth, and went away with the 'governor of the city to stay till Monday at his house at 'Worcester. He married a sister of Bancroft's, and another 'sister of Bancroft's went down with us. The village of 'Worcester is one of the prettiest in New England. . . . 'On Monday morning at nine o'clock we started again by 'railroad and went on to Springfield, where a deputation 'of two were waiting, and everything was in readiness that 'the utmost attention could suggest. Owing to the mild- 'ness of the weather, the Connecticut river was "open," 'videlicet not frozen, and they had a steamboat ready to 'carry us on to Hartford; thus saving a land-journey of 'only twenty-five miles, but on such roads at this time of 'year that it takes nearly twelve hours to accomplish! 'The boat was very small, the river full of floating blocks 'of ice, and the depth where we went (to avoid the ice 'and the current) not more than a few inches. After two 'hours and a half of this queer travelling we got to Hart- 'ford. There, there was quite an English inn; except in 'respect of the bed-rooms, which are always uncomfortable;

At Worcester.

From Springfield to Hartford.

Queer travelling.

NEW YORK: 1842.
C. D. to J. F.

'and the best committee of management that has yet pre-
'sented itself. They kept us more quiet, and were more
'considerate and thoughtful, even to their own exclusion,
'than any I have yet had to deal with. Kate's face being
At Hartford.
'horribly bad, I determined to give her a rest here; and
'accordingly wrote to get rid of my engagement at New-
'haven, on that plea. We remained in this town until the
'eleventh: holding a formal levee every day for two hours,
'and receiving on each from two hundred to three hundred
'people. At five o'clock on the afternoon of the eleventh,
'we set off (still by railroad) for Newhaven, which we
'reached about eight o'clock. The moment we had had
Levees at Hartford and Newhaven.
'tea, we were forced to open another levee for the students
'and professors of the college (the largest in the States),
'and the townspeople. I suppose we shook hands, before
'going to bed, with considerably more than five hundred
'people; and I stood, as a matter of course, the whole
'time . . . .

'Now, the deputation of two had come on with us from
'Hartford; and at Newhaven there was another com-
'mittee; and the immense fatigue and worry of all this,
'no words can exaggerate. We had been in the morning
'over jails and deaf and dumb asylums; had stopped on
At Wallingford.
'the journey at a place called Wallingford, where a whole
'town had turned out to see me, and to gratify whose
'curiosity the train stopped expressly; had had a day of
'great excitement and exertion on the Thursday (this
'being Friday); and were inexpressibly worn out. And
'when at last we got to bed and were "going" to fall
asleep, the choristers of the college turned out in a body,

'under the window, and serenaded us! We had had, by 'the bye, another serenade at Hartford, from a Mr. Adams '(a nephew of John Quincey Adams) and a German friend. '*They* were most beautiful singers: and when they began, 'in the dead of the night, in a long, musical, echoing 'passage outside our chamber door; singing, in low voices 'to guitars, about home and absent friends and other topics 'that they knew would interest us; we were more moved 'than I can tell you. In the midst of my sentimentality 'though, a thought occurred to me which made me laugh 'so immoderately that I was obliged to cover my face 'with the bedclothes. "Good Heavens!" I said to Kate, '"what a monstrously ridiculous and commonplace 'appearance my boots must have, outside the door!" I 'never *was* so impressed with a sense of the absurdity of 'boots, in all my life.

NEW YORK: 1842.

C. D. to J. F.

Serenades at Hartford and New-haven.

Absurdity of boots.

'The Newhaven serenade was not so good; though there 'were a great many voices, and a "reg'lar" band. It 'hadn't the heart of the other. Before it was six hours 'old, we were dressing with might and main, and making 'ready for our departure: it being a drive of twenty 'minutes to the steamboat, and the hour of sailing nine 'o'clock. After a hasty breakfast we started off; and 'after another levee on the deck (actually on the deck), 'and "three times three for Dickens," moved towards 'New York.

'I was delighted to find on board a Mr. Felton whom I 'had known at Boston. He is the Greek professor at 'Cambridge, and was going on to the ball and dinner. 'Like most men of his class whom I have seen, he is a

Cornelius C. Felton.

NEW YORK: 1842. C. D. to J. F.

'most delightful fellow—unaffected, hearty, genial, jolly; 'quite an Englishman of the best sort. We drank all the 'porter on board, ate all the cold pork and cheese, and 'were very merry indeed. I should have told you, in its 'proper place, that both at Hartford and Newhaven a 'regular bank was subscribed, by these committees, for '*all* my expenses. No bill was to be got at the bar, and 'everything was paid for. But as I would on no account 'suffer this to be done, I stoutly and positively refused to 'budge an inch until Mr. Q should have received the 'bills from the landlord's own hands, and paid them to 'the last farthing. Finding it impossible to move me, 'they suffered me, most unwillingly, to carry the 'point.

The Carlton hotel.

'About half past 2, we arrived here. In half an hour 'more, we reached this hotel, where a very splendid suite 'of rooms was prepared for us; and where everything is 'very comfortable, and no doubt (as at Boston) *enormously* 'dear. Just as we sat down to dinner, David Colden made 'his appearance; and when he had gone, and we were

Washington Irving.

'taking our wine, Washington Irving came in alone, with 'open arms. And here he stopped, until ten o'clock at 'night.' (Through Lord Jeffrey, with whom he was connected by marriage, and Macready, of whom he was the

David Colden.

cordial friend, we already knew Mr. Colden; and his subsequent visits to Europe led to many years' intimate intercourse, greatly enjoyed by us both.) 'Having got so far, I 'shall divide my discourse into four points. First, the 'ball. Secondly, some slight specimens of a certain phase 'of character in the Americans. Thirdly, international

'copyright. Fourthly, my life here, and projects to be 'carried out while I remain. NEW YORK: 1842.

C. D. to J. F.

'Firstly, the ball. It came off last Monday (vide pam- 'phlet). "At a quarter past 9, exactly," (I quote the 'printed order of proceeding), we were waited upon by '"David Colden, Esquire, and General George Morris;" 'habited, the former in full ball costume, the latter in the 'full dress uniform of Heaven knows what regiment of 'militia. The general took Kate, Colden gave his arm to 'me, and we proceeded downstairs to a carriage at the door, 'which took us to the stage door of the theatre: greatly 'to the disappointment of an enormous crowd who were 'besetting the main door, and making a most tremendous 'hullaballoo. The scene on our entrance was very striking. 'There were three thousand people present in full dress; 'from the roof to the floor, the theatre was decorated 'magnificently; and the light, glitter, glare, show, noise, 'and cheering, baffle my descriptive powers. We were 'walked in through the centre of the centre dress-box, 'the front whereof was taken out for the occasion; so to 'the back of the stage, where the mayor and other digni- 'taries received us; and we were then paraded all round 'the enormous ball-room, twice, for the gratification of the 'many-headed. That done, we began to dance—Heaven 'knows how we did it, for there was no room. And we 'continued dancing until, being no longer able even to 'stand, we slipped away quietly, and came back to the 'hotel. All the documents connected with this extra- 'ordinary festival (quite unparalleled here) we have pre- 'served; so you may suppose that on this head alone we

The ball.

Description of it.

NEW YORK: 1842. C. D. to J. F.

'shall have enough to show you when we come home. 'The bill of fare for supper, is, in its amount and extent, 'quite a curiosity.

'Now, the phase of character in the Americans which 'amuses me most, was put before me in its most amusing 'shape by the circumstances attending this affair. I 'had noticed it before, and have since, but I cannot 'better illustrate it than by reference to this theme. Of 'course I can do nothing but in some shape or other it 'gets into the newspapers. All manner of lies get there, 'and occasionally a truth so twisted and distorted that it 'has as much resemblance to the real fact as Quilp's leg 'to Taglioni's. But with this ball to come off, the news-'papers were if possible unusually loquacious; and in 'their accounts of me, and my seeings, sayings, and doings 'on the Saturday night and Sunday before, they describe 'my manner, mode of speaking, dressing, and so forth. 'In doing this, they report that I am a very charming 'fellow (of course), and have a very free and easy way 'with me; "which," say they, "at first amused a few '"fashionables;" but soon pleased them exceedingly. 'Another paper, coming after the ball, dwells upon its 'splendour and brilliancy; hugs itself and its readers 'upon all that Dickens saw; and winds up by gravely 'expressing its conviction, that Dickens was never in such 'society in England as he has seen in New York, and that 'its high and striking tone cannot fail to make an in-'delible impression on his mind! For the same reason 'I am always represented, whenever I appear in public, 'as being "very pale;" "apparently thunderstruck;"

A phase of character.

Newspaper accounts of the ball:

and of the principal guest.

'and utterly confounded by all I see. . . . You recognize 'the queer vanity which is at the root of all this? I have 'plenty of stories in connection with it to amuse you with when I return.' NEW YORK: 1842. C. D. to J. F.

'*Twenty-fourth February.*

'It is unnecessary to say . . . . that this letter *didn't* 'come by the sailing packet, and *will* come by the Cunard 'boat. After the ball I was laid up with a very bad 'sore throat, which confined me to the house four whole 'days; and as I was unable to write, or indeed to do any- 'thing but doze and drink lemonade, I missed the ship. . . 'I have still a horrible cold, and so has Kate, but in other 'respects we are all right. I proceed to my third head: 'the international copyright question.

'I believe there is no country, on the face of the earth, Opinion in America. 'where there is less freedom of opinion on any subject in 'reference to which there is a broad difference of opinion, 'than in this.—There!—I write the words with reluctance, 'disappointment, and sorrow; but I believe it from the 'bottom of my soul. I spoke, as you know, of inter- International copyright. 'national copyright, at Boston; and I spoke of it again 'at Hartford. My friends were paralysed with wonder at 'such audacious daring. The notion that I, a man alone 'by himself, in America, should venture to suggest to 'the Americans that there was one point on which they 'were neither just to their own countrymen nor to us, 'actually struck the boldest dumb! Washington Irving, American authors. 'Prescott, Hoffman, Bryant, Halleck, Dana, Washington 'Allston—every man who writes in this country is devoted 'to the question, and not one of them *dares* to raise his

NEW YORK: 1842.

C. D. to J. F.

'voice and complain of the atrocious state of the law. It 'is nothing that of all men living I am the greatest loser 'by it. It is nothing that I have a claim to speak and 'be heard. The wonder is that a breathing man can be 'found with temerity enough to suggest to the Americans 'the possibility of their having done wrong. I wish you 'could have seen the faces that I saw, down both sides of 'the table at Hartford, when I began to talk about Scott. 'I wish you could have heard how I gave it out. My 'blood so boiled as I thought of the monstrous injustice 'that I felt as if I were twelve feet high when I thrust it 'down their throats.

Outcry against the guest of the nation.

'I had no sooner made that second speech than such 'an outcry began (for the purpose of deterring me from 'doing the like in this city) as an Englishman can form 'no notion of. Anonymous letters; verbal dissuasions; newspaper attacks making Colt (a murderer who is attracting great attention here) an angel by comparison 'with me; assertions that I was no gentleman, but a mere 'mercenary scoundrel; coupled with the most monstrous 'mis-representations relative to my design and purpose 'in visiting the United States; came pouring in upon me 'every day. The dinner committee here (composed of 'the first gentlemen in America, remember that) were so 'dismayed, that they besought me not to pursue the 'subject *although they every one agreed with me.* I 'answered that I would. That nothing should deter 'me. . . . That the shame was theirs, not mine; and that 'as I would not spare them when I got home, I would 'not be silenced here. Accordingly, when the night

Asked not to speak on copyright.

Declines to comply.

'came, I asserted my right, with all the means I could 'command to give it dignity, in face, manner, or words; 'and I believe that if you could have seen and heard me, 'you would have loved me better for it than ever you did 'in your life. NEW YORK: 1842. C. D. to J. F.

'The *New York Herald*, which you will receive with 'this, is the *Satirist* of America; but having a great cir- 'culation (on account of its commercial intelligence and 'early news) it can afford to secure the best reporters. '. . . My speech is done, upon the whole, with remark- 'able accuracy. There are a great many typographical 'errors in it; and by the omission of one or two words, 'or the substitution of one word for another, it is often 'materially weakened. Thus I did not say that I '"claimed" my right, but that I "asserted" it; and I 'did not say that I had "some claim," but that I had '"a most righteous claim," to speak. But altogether 'it is very correct.' *New York Herald.* Speech at dinner.

Washington Irving was chairman of this dinner, and having from the first a dread that he should break down in his speech, the catastrophe came accordingly. Near him sat the Cambridge professor who had come with Dickens by boat from Newhaven; with whom already a warm friendship had been formed that lasted for life, and who has pleasantly sketched what happened. Mr. Felton saw Irving constantly in the interval of preparation, and could not but despond at his daily iterated foreboding of *I shall certainly break down:* though, besides the real dread, there was a sly humour which heightened its whimsical Washington Irving in the chair.

NEW YORK: 1842.

horror with an irresistible drollery. But the professor plucked up hope a little when the night came, and he saw that Irving had laid under his plate the manuscript of his speech. During dinner, nevertheless, his old foreboding cry was still heard, and 'at last the moment 'arrived; Mr. Irving rose; and the deafening and long-'continued applause by no means lessened his appre-'hension. He began in his pleasant voice; got through 'two or three sentences pretty easily, but in the next 'hesitated; and, after one or two attempts to go on, gave 'it up, with a graceful allusion to the tournament and the 'troop of knights all armed and eager for the fray; and 'ended with the toast CHARLES DICKENS, THE GUEST OF 'THE NATION. *There!* said he, as he resumed his seat 'amid applause as great as had greeted his rising, *There! 'I told you I should break down, and I've done it!'*

Irving's break-down.

He was in London a few months later, on his way to Spain; and I heard Thomas Moore describe* at Rogers's table the difficulty there had been to overcome his reluctance, because of this break-down, to go to the dinner of the Literary Fund on the occasion of Prince Albert's presiding. 'However,' said Moore, 'I told him only to 'attempt a few words, and I suggested what they should 'be, and he said he'd never thought of anything so easy, 'and he went and did famously.' I knew very well, as I listened, that this had *not* been the result; but as the distinguished American had found himself, on this second occasion, not among orators as in New York, but among men as unable as himself to speak in public, and equally

At a dinner in London same year.

* On the 22nd of May, 1842.

able to do better things,* he was doubtless more reconciled to his own failure. I have been led to this digression by Dickens's silence on his friend's break-down. He had so great a love for Irving that it was painful to speak of him as at any disadvantage, and of the New York dinner he wrote only in its connection with his own copyright speeches. NEW YORK: 1842.

'The effect of all this copyright agitation at least has been 'to awaken a great sensation on both sides of the subject; 'the respectable newspapers and reviews taking up the 'cudgels as strongly in my favour, as the others have done 'against me. Some of the vagabonds take great credit to 'themselves (grant us patience!) for having made me 'popular by publishing my books in newspapers: as if 'there were no England, no Scotland, no Germany, no 'place but America in the whole world. A splendid satire 'upon this kind of trash has just occurred. A man came 'here yesterday, and demanded, not besought but de- 'manded, pecuniary assistance; and fairly bullied Mr. Q for 'money. When I came home, I dictated a letter to this 'effect—that such applications reached me in vast num- 'bers every day; that if I were a man of fortune, I could 'not render assistance to all who sought it; and that, 'depending on my own exertion for all the help I could

Results of copyright speeches.

C. D. to J. F.

A demand for help.

* The dinner was on the 10th of May, and early the following morning I had a letter about it from Mr. Blanchard, containing these words: 'Washington 'Irving couldn't utter a word for trembling, and Moore was as little as usual. 'But, poor Tom Campbell, great Heavens! what a spectacle! Amid roars 'of laughter he began a sentence three times about something that Dugald 'Stewart or Lord Bacon had said, and never could get beyond those words. 'The Prince was capital, though deucedly frightened. He seems unaffected 'and amiable, as well as very clever.'

Laman Blanchard to J. F.

NEW YORK: 1842.

C. D. to J. F.

'give, I regretted to say I could afford him none. Upon 'this, my gentleman sits down and writes me that he 'is an itinerant bookseller; that he is the first man who 'sold my books in New York; that he is distressed in 'the city where I am revelling in luxury; that he thinks 'it rather strange that the man who wrote *Nickleby* 'should be utterly destitute of feeling; and that he would 'have me "take care I don't repent it." What do you 'think of *that?*—as Mac would say. I thought it such a 'good commentary, that I dispatched the letter to the 'editor of the only English newspaper here, and told him 'he might print it if he liked.

A bookseller in distress.

A suggestion.

'I will tell you what *I* should like, my dear friend, 'always supposing that your judgment concurs with mine; 'and that you would take the trouble to get such a docu-'ment. I should like to have a short letter addressed to 'me, by the principal English authors who signed the 'international copyright petition, expressive of their sense 'that I have done my duty to the cause. I am sure 'I deserve it, but I don't wish it on that ground. It is 'because its publication in the best journals here would 'unquestionably do great good. As the gauntlet is 'down, let us go on. Clay has already sent a gentle-'man to me express from Washington (where I shall 'be on the 6th or 7th of next month) to declare his 'strong interest in the matter, his cordial approval of the '"manly" course I have held in reference to it, and his 'desire to stir in it if possible. I have lighted up such a 'blaze that a meeting of the foremost people on the other 'side (very respectfully and properly conducted in refer-

Henry Clay's opinion.

'ence to me, personally, I am bound to say) was held in 'this town 'tother night. And it would be a thousand 'pities if we did not strike as hard as we can, now that 'the iron is so hot. NEW YORK: 1842. C. D. to J. F.

'I have come at last, and it is time I did, to my life 'here, and intentions for the future. I can do nothing 'that I want to do, go nowhere where I want to go, and 'see nothing that I want to see. If I turn into the street, 'I am followed by a multitude. If I stay at home, the 'house becomes, with callers, like a fair. If I visit a public 'institution, with only one friend, the directors come down 'incontinently, waylay me in the yard, and address me in 'a long speech. I go to a party in the evening, and am 'so inclosed and hemmed about by people, stand where I 'will, that I am exhausted for want of air. I dine out, 'and have to talk about everything, to everybody. I go 'to church for quiet, and there is a violent rush to the 'neighbourhood of the pew I sit in, and the clergyman 'preaches *at* me. I take my seat in a railroad car, and 'the very conductor won't leave me alone. I get out at a 'station, and can't drink a glass of water, without having 'a hundred people looking down my throat when I open 'my mouth to swallow. Conceive what all this is! 'Then by every post, letters on letters arrive, all about 'nothing, and all demanding an immediate answer. This 'man is offended because I won't live in his house; and 'that man is thoroughly disgusted because I won't go out 'more than four times in one evening. I have no rest or 'peace, and am in a perpetual worry. Life in New York. Distresses of popularity.

'Under these febrile circumstances, which this climate

NEW YORK: 1842.

C. D. to J. F.

Intentions for the future.

Refusal of invitations.

'especially favors, I have come to the resolution that I 'will not (so far as my will has anything to do with 'the matter) accept any more public entertainments or 'public recognitions of any kind, during my stay in 'the United States; and in pursuance of this deter- 'mination I have refused invitations from Philadelphia, 'Baltimore, Washington, Virginia, Albany, and Provi- 'dence. Heaven knows whether this will be effectual, 'but I shall soon see, for on Monday morning the 28th we 'leave for Philadelphia. There, I shall only stay three 'days. Thence we go to Baltimore, and *there* I shall only 'stay three days. Thence to Washington, where we may 'stay perhaps ten days; perhaps not so long. Thence to 'Virginia, where we may halt for one day; and thence to 'Charleston, where we may pass a week perhaps; and 'where we shall very likely remain until your March 'letters reach us, through David Colden. I had a design 'of going from Charleston to Columbia in South Carolina, 'and there engaging a carriage, a baggage-tender and 'negro boy to guard the same, and a saddle-horse for 'myself—with which caravan I intended going "right

and west.

'"away," as they say here, into the west, through the wilds 'of Kentucky and Tennessee, across the Alleghany-moun- 'tains, and so on until we should strike the lakes and 'could get to Canada. But it has been represented to me 'that this is a track only known to travelling merchants; 'that the roads are bad, the country a tremendous waste, 'the inns log-houses, and the journey one that would play 'the very devil with Kate. I am staggered, but not 'deterred. If I find it possible to be done in the time, I

'mean to do it; being quite satisfied that without some 'such dash, I can never be a free agent, or see anything 'worth the telling. NEW YORK: 1842. C. D. to J. F.

'We mean to return home in a packet-ship—not a 'steamer. Her name is the George Washington, and she 'will sail from here, for Liverpool, on the seventh of June. 'At that season of the year, they are seldom more than 'three weeks making the voyage; and I never will trust 'myself upon the wide ocean, if it please Heaven, in a 'steamer again. When I tell you all that I observed on 'board that Britannia, I shall astonish you. Meanwhile, 'consider two of their dangers. First, that if the funnel 'were blown overboard, the vessel must instantly be on 'fire, from stem to stern: to comprehend which con- 'sequence, you have only to understand that the funnel is 'more than 40 feet high, and that at night you see the 'solid fire two or three feet above its top. Imagine this 'swept down by a strong wind, and picture to yourself the 'amount of flame on deck; and that a strong wind is likely 'to sweep it down you soon learn, from the precautions 'taken to keep it up in a storm, when it is the first thing 'thought of. Secondly, each of these boats consumes 'between London and Halifax 700 tons of coals; and it 'is pretty clear, from this enormous difference of weight 'in a ship of only 1200 tons burden in all, that she must 'either be too heavy when she comes out of port, or too 'light when she goes in. The daily difference in her 'rolling, as she burns the coals out, is something absolutely 'fearful. Add to all this, that by day and night she is 'full of fire and people, that she has no boats, and that the

As to return.

Dangers incident to steamers.

Two named.

NEW YORK: 1842.
C. D. to J. F.

'struggling of that enormous machinery in a heavy sea 'seems as though it would rend her into fragments—and 'you may have a pretty con-siderable damned good sort 'of a feeble notion that it don't fit nohow; and that it 'a'nt calculated to make you smart, overmuch; and that 'you don't feel 'special bright; and by no means first rate;

Pure Americanisms.

'and not at all tonguey (or disposed for conversation); 'and that however rowdy you may be by natur', it does 'use you up com-plete, and that's a fact; and makes you 'quake considerable, and disposed toe damn the ĕngine!— 'All of which phrases, I beg to add, are pure Americanisms 'of the first water.

Slavery.

'When we reach Baltimore, we are in the regions of 'slavery. It exists there, in its least shocking and most 'mitigated form; but there it is. They whisper, here '(they dare only whisper, you know, and that below their 'breaths), that on that place, and all through the South, 'there is a dull gloomy cloud on which the very word 'seems written. I shall be able to say, one of these days, 'that I accepted no public mark of respect in any place 'where slavery was;—and that's something.

Ladies of America.

'The ladies of America are decidedly and unquestion- 'ably beautiful. Their complexions are not so good as 'those of Englishwomen; their beauty does not last so 'long; and their figures are very inferior. But they are 'most beautiful. I still reserve my opinion of the national 'character—just whispering that I tremble for a radical 'coming here, unless he is a radical on principle, by reason 'and reflection, and from the sense of right. I fear that if 'he were anything else, he would return home a tory.

'. . . . . I say no more on that head for two months 'from this time, save that I do fear that the heaviest 'blow ever dealt at liberty will be dealt by this country, 'in the failure of its example to the earth. The scenes 'that are passing in Congress now, all tending to the 'separation of the States, fill one with such a deep disgust 'that I dislike the very name of Washington (meaning 'the place, not the man), and am repelled by the mere 'thought of approaching it.

NEW YORK: 1842. C. D. to J. F.

Party conflicts.

'*Twenty-seventh February. Sunday.*

'There begins to be great consternation here, in 'reference to the Cunard packet which (we suppose) left 'Liverpool on the fourth. She has not yet arrived. We 'scarcely know what to do with ourselves in our extreme 'anxiety to get letters from home. I have really had 'serious thoughts of going back to Boston, alone, to be 'nearer news. We have determined to remain here until 'Tuesday afternoon, if she should not arrive before, and to 'send Mr. Q and the luggage on to Philadelphia to-'morrow morning. God grant she may not have gone 'down: but every ship that comes in brings intelligence 'of a terrible gale (which indeed was felt ashore here) on 'the night of the fourteenth; and the sea-captains swear '(not without some prejudice of course) that no steamer 'could have lived through it, supposing her to have been 'in its full fury. As there is no steam packet to go to 'England, supposing the Caledonia not to arrive, we are 'obliged to send our letters by the Garrick ship, which 'sails early to-morrow morning. Consequently I must

A Cunard steamer missing.

Misgivings.

Non-arrival of Caledonia.

NEW YORK: 1842. C. D. to J. F.

'huddle this up, and dispatch it to the post-office with all 'speed. I have so much to say that I could fill quires of 'paper, which renders this sudden pull-up the more pro- 'voking.

Petition for Congress.

'I have in my portmanteau a petition for an inter- 'national copyright law, signed by all the best American 'writers with Washington Irving at their head. They 'have requested me to hand it to Clay for presentation, 'and to back it with any remarks I may think proper to 'offer. So "Hoo-roar for the principle, as the money- '"lender said, ven he vouldn't renoo the bill."

'God bless you..... You know what I would say 'about home and the darlings. A hundred times God 'bless you..... Fears are entertained for Lord Ash- 'burton also. Nothing has been heard of him.'

A brief letter, sent me next day by the minister's bag, was in effect a postscript to the foregoing; and expressed still more strongly the doubts and apprehensions his voyage out had impressed him with, and which, though he afterwards saw reason greatly to modify his misgivings, were not so strange at that time as they appear to us now.

No hope of the Caledonia.

'Carlton-house, New York, February twenty-eighth, '1842.... The Caledonia, I grieve and regret to say, has 'not arrived. If she left England to her time, she has been 'four and twenty days at sea. There is no news of her; 'and on the nights of the fourteenth and eighteenth it 'blew a terrible gale, which almost justifies the worst 'suspicions. For myself, I have hardly any hope of her; 'having seen enough, in our passage out, to convince me

'that steaming across the ocean in heavy weather is as 'yet an experiment of the utmost hazard.

NEW YORK: 1842. — C. D. to J. F.

'As it was supposed that there would be no steamer 'whatever for England this month (since in ordinary 'course the Caledonia would have returned with the 'mails on the 2nd of March), I hastily got the letters ready 'yesterday and sent them by the Garrick; which may 'perhaps be three weeks out, but is not very likely to be 'longer. But belonging to the Cunard company is a boat 'called the Unicorn, which in the summer time plies up 'the St. Lawrence, and brings passengers from Canada to 'join the British and North American steamers at Halifax. 'In the winter she lies at the last-mentioned place; from 'which news has come this morning that they have sent her 'on to Boston for the mails; and, rather than interrupt the 'communication, mean to dispatch her to England in lieu 'of the poor Caledonia. This in itself, by the way, is a 'daring deed; for she was originally built to run between 'Liverpool and Glasgow, and is no more designed for the 'Atlantic than a Calais packet-boat; though she once 'crossed it, in the summer season.

Substitute for the Caledonia.

'You may judge, therefore, what the owners think of 'the probability of the Caledonia's arrival. How slight 'an alteration in our plans would have made us passengers 'on board of her!

'It would be difficult to tell you, my dear fellow, what 'an impression this has made upon our minds, or with 'what intense anxiety and suspense we have been waiting 'for your letters from home. We were to have gone 'South to-day, but linger here until to-morrow afternoon

NEW YORK: 1842. C. D. to J. F.

'(having sent the secretary and luggage forward) for one 'more chance of news. Love to dear Macready, and to 'dear Mac, and every one we care for. It's useless to 'speak of the dear children. It seems now as though we 'should never hear of them. . . . .

Of distinguished Americans.

'P.S. Washington Irving is *a great* fellow. We have 'laughed most heartily together. He is just the man he 'ought to be. So is Doctor Channing, with whom I have 'had an interesting correspondence since I saw him last 'at Boston. Halleck is a merry little man. Bryant a sad 'one, and very reserved. Washington Allston the painter '(who wrote *Monaldi*) is a fine specimen of a glorious 'old genius. Longfellow, whose volume of poems I have 'got for you, is a frank accomplished man as well as a fine 'writer, and will be in town "next fall." Tell Macready 'that I suspect prices here must have rather altered since Hotel bills. 'his time. I paid our fortnight's bill here, last night. 'We have dined out every day (except when I was laid up 'with a sore throat), and only had in all four bottles of 'wine. The bill was 70*l.* English ! ! !

'You will see, by my other letter, how we have been 'fêted and feasted; and how there is war to the knife 'about the international copyright; and how I *will* 'speak about it, and decline to be put down . . . .

Thoughts of the children.

'Oh for news from home! I think of your letters so 'full of heart and friendship, with perhaps a little scrawl 'of Charley's or Mamey's, lying at the bottom of the 'deep sea; and am as full of sorrow as if they had once 'been living creatures.—Well! they *may* come, yet.'

They did reach him, but not by the Caledonia. His fears as to that vessel were but too well founded. On the very day when she was due in Boston (the 18th of February) it was learnt in London that she had undergone misadventure; that, her decks having been swept and her rudder torn away, though happily no lives were lost, she had returned disabled to Cork; and that the Acadia, having received her passengers and mails, was to sail with them from Liverpool next day.

NEW YORK: 1842.

Disaster to the Caledonia.

Acadia takes her place.

Of the main subject of that letter written on the day preceding; of the quite unpremeditated impulse, out of which sprang his advocacy of claims which he felt to be represented in his person; of the injustice done by his entertainers to their guest in ascribing such advocacy to selfishness; and of the graver wrong done by them to their own highest interests, nay, even to their commonest and most vulgar interests, in continuing to reject those claims; I will add nothing now to what all those years ago I laboured very hard to lay before many readers. It will be enough if I here print, from the authors' letters I sent out to him by the next following mail in compliance with his wish, this which follows from a very dear friend of his and mine. I fortunately had it transcribed before I posted it to him; Mr. Carlyle having in some haste written from 'Templand, 26 March, '1842,' and taken no copy.

International copyright.

'We learn by the newspapers that you everywhere in 'America stir up the question of international copyright, 'and thereby awaken huge dissonance where all else 'were triumphant unison for you. I am asked my opinion

Letter to Dickens from Carlyle.

NEW YORK: 1842.

'of the matter, and requested to write it down in 'words.

Carlyle to C. D.

'Several years ago, if memory err not, I was one of 'many English writers, who, under the auspices of Miss 'Martineau, did already sign a petition to congress pray- 'ing for an international copyright between the two 'Nations,—which properly are not two Nations, but one; '*indivisible* by parliament, congress, or any kind of 'human law or diplomacy, being already *united* by 'Heaven's Act of Parliament, and the everlasting law of 'Nature and Fact. To that opinion I still adhere, and 'am like to continue adhering.

'In discussion of the matter before any congress or 'parliament, manifold considerations and argumentations 'will necessarily arise; which to me are not interesting, 'nor essential for helping me to a decision. They respect 'the time and manner in which the thing should be; not 'at all whether the thing should be or not. In an ancient 'book, reverenced I should hope on both sides of the 'Ocean, it was thousands of years ago written down in the 'most decisive and explicit manner, "Thou *shalt not* steal."

Argument against stealing.

'That thou belongest to a different "Nation," and canst 'steal without being certainly hanged for it, gives thee no 'permission to steal! Thou shalt *not* in anywise steal at 'all! So it is written down, for Nations and for Men, in 'the Law-Book of the Maker of this Universe. Nay, poor 'Jeremy Bentham and others step in here, and will demon- 'strate that it is actually our true convenience and expe- 'diency not to steal; which I for my share, on the great 'scale and on the small, and in all conceivable scales and

'shapes, do also firmly believe it to be. For example, if 'Nations abstained from stealing, what need were there of 'fighting,—with its butcherings and burnings, decidedly 'the most expensive thing in this world? How much 'more two Nations, which, as I said, are but one Nation; 'knit in a thousand ways by Nature and Practical Inter- 'course; indivisible brother elements of the same great 'SAXONDOM, to which in all honorable ways be long life!

NEW YORK: 1842. Carlyle to C. D.

'When Mr. Robert Roy M'Gregor lived in the district of 'Menteith on the Highland border two centuries ago, he 'for his part found it more convenient to supply himself 'with beef by stealing it alive from the adjacent glens, 'than by buying it killed in the Stirling butchers'-market. 'It was Mr. Roy's plan of supplying himself with beef in 'those days, this of stealing it. In many a little "Con- '"gress" in the district of Menteith, there was debating, 'doubt it not, and much specious argumentation this way 'and that, before they could ascertain that, really and 'truly, buying was the best way to get your beef; which 'however in the long run they did with one assent find 'it indisputably to be: and accordingly they hold by it to 'this day.'

Rob Roy's plan: not the best.

This brave letter was an important service rendered at a critical time, and Dickens was very grateful for it. But, as time went on, he had other and higher causes for gratitude to its writer. Admiration of Carlyle increased in him with his years; and there was no one whom in later life he honoured so much, or had a more profound regard for.

C. D.'s admiration of Carlyle.

CHAPTER XXI.

PHILADELPHIA, WASHINGTON, AND THE SOUTH.

1842.

PHILADELPHIA: 1842.

DICKENS'S next letter was begun in the 'United-states-'hotel, Philadelphia,' and bore date 'Sunday, sixth 'March, 1842.' It treated of much dealt with afterwards at greater length in the *Notes*, but the freshness and vivacity of the first impressions in it have surprised me. I do not however print any passage here which has not its own interest independently of anything contained in that book. The rule will be continued, as in the portions of letters already given, of not transcribing anything before printed, or anything having even but a near resemblance to descriptions that appear in the *Notes*.

C. D. to J. F.

'. . . . . As this is likely to be the only 'quiet day I shall have for a long time, I devote it 'to writing to you. We have heard nothing from you* 'yet, and only have for our consolation the reflection that 'the Columbia † is now on her way out. No news had

* At the top of the sheet, above the address and date, are the words 'Read 'on. We *have* your precious letters, but you'll think, at first, we have not. 'C. D.'

† The ship next in rotation to the Caledonia from Liverpool.

'been heard of the Caledonia yesterday afternoon, when 'we left New York. We *were* to have quitted that 'place last Tuesday, but have been detained there all 'the week by Kate having so bad a sore throat that she 'was obliged to keep her bed. We left yesterday after- 'noon at five o'clock, and arrived here at eleven last 'night. Let me say, by the way, that this is a very trying 'climate.

PHILADELPHIA: 1842.

C. D. to J. F.

'I have often asked Americans in London which were 'the better railroads—ours or theirs? They have taken 'time for reflection, and generally replied on mature 'consideration that they rather thought we excelled; in 'respect of the punctuality with which we arrived at 'our stations, and the smoothness of our travelling. I 'wish you could see what an American railroad is, in 'some parts where I now have seen them. I won't 'say I wish you could feel what it is, because that 'would be an unchristian and savage aspiration. It is 'never inclosed, or warded off. You walk down the main 'street of a large town: and, slap-dash, headlong, pell- 'mell, down the middle of the street; with pigs burrowing, 'and boys flying kites and playing marbles, and men 'smoking, and women talking, and children crawling, 'close to the very rails; there comes tearing along a mad 'locomotive with its train of cars, scattering a red-hot 'shower of sparks (from its *wood* fire) in all directions; 'screeching, hissing, yelling, and panting; and nobody 'one atom more concerned than if it were a hundred 'miles away. You cross a turnpike-road; and there is no 'gate, no policeman, no signal—nothing to keep the way-

Promise as to railroads.

Experience of them.

PHILADELPHIA: 1842.

C. D. to J. F.

'farer or quiet traveller out of the way, but a wooden 'arch on which is written in great letters "Look out for '"the locomotive." And if any man, woman, or child, 'don't look out, why it's his or her fault, and there's an 'end of it.

Railway cars.

'The cars are like very shabby omnibuses—only larger; 'holding sixty or seventy people. The seats, instead of 'being placed long ways, are put cross-wise, back to 'front. Each holds two. There is a long row of these on 'each side of the caravan, and a narrow passage up the 'centre. The windows are usually all closed, and there 'is very often, in addition, a hot, close, most intolerable

Charcoal stoves.

'charcoal stove in a red-hot glow. The heat and closeness 'are quite insupportable. But this is the characteristic 'of all American houses, of all the public institutions, 'chapels, theatres, and prisons. From the constant use 'of the hard anthracite coal in these beastly furnaces, a 'perfectly new class of diseases is springing up in the 'country. Their effect upon an Englishman is briefly 'told. He is always very sick and very faint; and has an 'intolerable headache, morning, noon, and night.

Ladies' cars.

'In the ladies' car, there is no smoking of tobacco 'allowed. All gentlemen who have ladies with them, sit 'in this car; and it is usually very full. Before it, is the 'gentlemen's car; which is something narrower. As I 'had a window close to me yesterday which commanded 'this gentlemen's car, I looked at it pretty often, perforce. The flashes of saliva flew so perpetually and incessantly 'out of the windows all the way, that it looked as though 'they were ripping open feather-beds inside, and letting

'the wind dispose of the feathers.* But this spitting is 'universal. In the courts of law, the judge has his 'spittoon on the bench, the counsel have theirs, the 'witness has his, the prisoner his, and the crier his. The 'jury are accommodated at the rate of three men to a 'spittoon (or spit-box as they call it here); and the spec- 'tators in the gallery are provided for, as so many men 'who in the course of nature expectorate without cessa- 'tion. There are spit-boxes in every steamboat, bar-room, 'public dining-room, house of office, and place of general 'resort, no matter what it be. In the hospitals, the 'students are requested, by placard, to use the boxes 'provided for them, and not to spit upon the stairs. I 'have twice seen gentlemen, at evening parties in New 'York, turn aside when they were not engaged in conver- 'sation, and spit upon the drawing-room carpet. And in 'every bar-room and hotel passage the stone floor looks as 'if it were paved with open oysters—from the quantity of 'this kind of deposit which tesselates it all over . . .

PHILADELPHIA: 1842. C. D. to J. F.

Spittoons.

'The institutions at Boston, and at Hartford, are most 'admirable. It would be very difficult indeed to improve 'upon them. But this is not so at New York; where 'there is an ill-managed lunatic asylum, a bad jail, a 'dismal workhouse, and a perfectly intolerable place of 'police-imprisonment. A man is found drunk in the 'streets, and is thrown into a cell below the surface of the 'earth; profoundly dark; so full of noisome vapours that 'when you enter it with a candle you see a ring about the

Contrasts in Massachusetts and New York.

* This comparison is employed in another descriptive passage to be found in the *Notes* (p. 57).

PHILADELPHIA: 1842.

C. D. to J. F.

'light, like that which surrounds the moon in wet and 'cloudy weather; and so offensive and disgusting in its 'filthy odours, that you *cannot bear* its stench. He is 'shut up within an iron door, in a series of vaulted pas-'sages where no one stays; has no drop of water, or ray 'of light, or visitor, or help of any kind; and there he 'remains until the magistrate's arrival. If he die (as one 'man did not long ago) he is half eaten by the rats in an 'hour's time (as this man was). I expressed, on seeing 'these places the other night, the disgust I felt, and which 'it would be impossible to repress. "Well; I don't know," 'said the night constable—that's a national answer by the 'bye—"Well; I don't know. I've had six and twenty '"young women locked up here together, and beautiful '"ones too, and that's a fact." The cell was certainly no 'larger than the wine-cellar in Devonshire-terrace; at 'least three feet lower; and stunk like a common sewer. 'There was one woman in it, then. The magistrate begins 'his examinations at five o'clock in the morning; the watch 'is set at seven at night; if the prisoners have been given in 'charge by an officer, they are not taken out before nine 'or ten; and in the interval they remain in these places, 'where they could no more be heard to cry for help, in 'case of a fit or swoon among them, than a man's voice 'could be heard after he was coffined up in his grave.

Police-cells in New York.

'And that's a fact!'

Prisons.

'There is a prison in this same city, and indeed in the 'same building, where prisoners for grave offences await 'their trial, and to which they are sent back when under 'remand. It sometimes happens that a man or woman 'will remain here for twelve months, waiting the result

of motions for new trial, and in arrest of judgment, and what not. I went into it the other day: without any notice or preparation, otherwise I find it difficult to catch them in their work-a-day aspect. I stood in a long, high, narrow building, consisting of four galleries one above the other, with a bridge across each, on which sat a turnkey, sleeping or reading as the case might be. From the roof, a couple of windsails dangled and drooped, limp and useless; the skylight being fast closed, and they only designed for summer use. In the centre of the building was the eternal stove; and along both sides of every gallery was a long row of iron doors—looking like furnace doors, being very small, but black and cold as if the fires within had gone out.

House of detention in New York.

'A man with keys appears, to show us round. A good-looking fellow, and, in his way, civil and obliging.' (I omit a dialogue of which the substance has been printed,* and give only that which appears for the first time here.)

'"Suppose a man's here for twelve months. Do you "mean to say he never comes out at that little iron "door."

'"He *may* walk some, perhaps—not much."

'"Will you show me a few of them?"

'"Ah! All, if you like."

'He threw open a door, and I looked in. An old man was sitting on his bed, reading. The light came in through a small chink, very high up in the wall. Across the room ran a thick iron pipe to carry off filth; this was bored for the reception of something like a big funnel in shape;

A prisoner.

* *Notes*, p. 49.

PHILADELPHIA: 1842.

C. D. to J. F.

'and over the funnel was a watercock. This was his wash-
'ing apparatus and water-closet. It was not savoury, but
'not very offensive. He looked up at me; gave himself
'an odd, dogged kind of shake; and fixed his eyes on his
'book again. I came out, and the door was shut and
'locked. He had been there a month, and would have to
wait another month for his trial. "Has he ever walked
"out now, for instance?" "No." . . .

'"In England, if a man is under sentence of death
"even, he has a yard to walk in at certain times."

'"Possible?"

". . . Making me this answer with a coolness which is
perfectly untranslateable and inexpressible, and which is
'quite peculiar to the soil, he took me to the women's
Women prisoners.
'side; telling me, upon the way, all about this man, who,
'it seems, murdered his wife, and will certainly be
'hanged. The women's doors have a small square aper-
'ture in them; I looked through one, and saw a
Boy prisoner.
'pretty boy about ten or twelve years old, who seemed
'lonely and miserable enough—as well he might. "What's
'"*he* been doing?" says I. "Nothing" says my friend.
'"Nothing!" says I. "No," says he. "He's here for
'"safe keeping. He saw his father kill his mother, and
'"is detained to give evidence against him—that was
'"his father, you saw just now." "But that's rather
'"hard treatment for a witness, isn't it?"—"Well! I
'"don't know. It a'nt a very rowdy life, and *that's* a fact."
'So my friend, who was an excellent fellow in his way, and
'very obliging, and a handsome young man to boot, took
'me off to show me some more curiosities; and I was very

'much obliged to him, for the place was so hot, and I so 'giddy, that I could scarcely stand. . . . PHILADELPHIA: 1842.

C. D. to J. F.

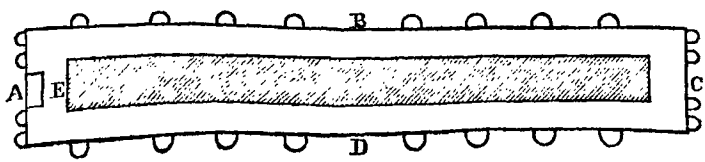
'When a man is hanged in New York, he is walked out 'of one of these cells, without any condemned sermon or 'other religious formalities, straight into the narrow jail 'yard, which may be about the width of Cranbourn-alley. 'There, a gibbet is erected, which is of curious construc- 'tion; for the culprit stands on the earth with the rope 'about his neck, which passes through a pulley in the top 'of the "Tree" (see *Newgate Calendar* passim), and is 'attached to a weight something heavier than the man. 'This weight being suddenly let go, drags the rope down 'with it, and sends the criminal flying up fourteen feet 'into the air; while the judge, and jury, and five and 'twenty citizens (whose presence is required by the law), 'stand by, that they may afterwards certify to the fact. 'This yard is a very dismal place; and when I looked at 'it, I thought the practice infinitely superior to ours: 'much more solemn, and far less degrading and indecent.

Capital punishment in New York:

better than ours then was.

'There is another prison near New York which is a 'house of correction. The convicts labour in stone- 'quarries near at hand, but the jail has no covered yards 'or shops, so that when the weather is wet (as it was when 'I was there) each man is shut up in his own little cell, 'all the live-long day. These cells, in all the correction- 'houses I have seen, are on one uniform plan—thus:

House of correction.



PHILADELPHIA: 1842.

C. D. to J. F.

'A, B, C, and D, are the walls of the building with windows 'in them, high up in the wall. The shaded place in the 'centre represents four tiers of cells, one above the other, 'with doors of grated iron, and a light grated gallery to 'each tier. Four tiers front to B, and four to D, so that 'by this means you may be said, in walking round, to see

A correction-house:

'eight tiers in all. The intermediate blank space you 'walk in, looking up at these galleries; so that, coming in 'at the door E, and going either to the right or left till 'you come back to the door again, you see all the cells 'under one roof and in one high room. Imagine them in

with four hundred single cells.

'number 400, and in every one a man locked up; this 'one with his hands through the bars of his grate, this one 'in bed (in the middle of the day, remember), and this 'one flung down in a heap upon the ground with his 'head against the bars like a wild beast. Make the rain 'pour down in torrents outside. Put the everlasting 'stove in the midst; hot, suffocating, and vaporous, as a 'witch's cauldron. Add a smell like that of a thousand 'old mildewed umbrellas wet through, and a thousand 'dirty clothes-bags musty, moist, and fusty, and you will 'have some idea—a very feeble one, my dear friend, on my 'word—of this place yesterday week. You know of course 'that we adopted our improvements in prison-discipline 'from the American pattern; but I am confident that the 'writers who have the most lustily lauded the American 'prisons, have never seen Chesterton's domain or Tracey's.*

Comparison with English prisons.

'There is no more comparison between these two prisons 'of ours, and any I have seen here YET, than there is

* See *ante*, p. 255.

'between the keepers here, and those two gentlemen. PHILADELPHIA: 1842.
'Putting out of sight the difficulty we have in England of C. D. to J. F.
'finding *useful* labour for the prisoners (which of course
'arises from our being an older country, and having vast
'numbers of artizans unemployed), our system is more
'complete, more impressive, and more satisfactory in every
'respect. It is very possible that I have not come to the
'best, not having yet seen Mount Auburn. I will tell
'you when I have. And also when I have come to those
'inns, mentioned—vaguely rather—by Miss Martineau, Inns and landlords.
'where they undercharge literary people for the love the
'landlords bear them. My experience, so far, has been of
'establishments where (perhaps for the same reason) they
'very monstrously and violently overcharge a man whose
'position forbids remonstrance.

'WASHINGTON, Sunday, March the Thirteenth, 1842.

'In allusion to the last sentence, my dear friend, I WASHINGTON: 1842.
'must tell you a slight experience I had in Philadelphia.
'My rooms had been ordered for a week, but, in conse-
'quence of Kate's illness, only Mr. Q and the luggage
'had gone on. Mr. Q always lives at the table d'hôte,
'so that while we were in New York our rooms were
'empty. The landlord not only charged me half the
'full rent for the time during which the rooms were
'reserved for us (which was quite right), but charged me
'also *for board for myself and Kate and Anne, at the* Hotel extortion.
'*rate of nine dollars per day* for the same period, when
'we were actually living, at the same expense, in New
'York ! ! ! I *did* remonstrate upon this head; but was

WASHINGTON: 1842.

C. D. to J. F.

'coolly told it was the custom (which I have since been 'assured is a lie), and had nothing for it but to pay the 'amount. What else could I do? I was going away by 'the steamboat at five o'clock in the morning; and the 'landlord knew perfectly well that my disputing an item 'of his bill would draw down upon me the sacred wrath 'of the newspapers, which would one and all demand in 'capitals if THIS was the gratitude of the man whom 'America had received as she had never received any 'other man but La Fayette?

Philadelphia Penitentiary.

'I went last Tuesday to the Eastern Penitentiary near 'Philadelphia, which is the only prison in the States, or I 'believe in the world, on the principle of hopeless, strict, 'and unrelaxed solitary confinement, during the whole 'term of the sentence. It is wonderfully kept, but a 'most dreadful, fearful place. The inspectors, immediately 'on my arrival in Philadelphia, invited me to pass the day 'in the jail, and to dine with them when I had finished 'my inspection, that they might hear my opinion of the

The solitary system.

'system. Accordingly I passed the whole day in going 'from cell to cell, and conversing with the prisoners. 'Every facility was given me, and no constraint whatever 'imposed upon any man's free speech. If I were to write 'you a letter of twenty sheets, I could not tell you this 'one day's work; so I will reserve it until that happy 'time when we shall sit round the table at Jack Straw's '—you, and I, and Mac—and go over my diary. I never 'shall be able to dismiss from my mind, the impressions 'of that day. Making notes of them, as I have done, is 'an absurdity, for they are written, beyond all power of

'erasure, in my brain. I saw men who had been there, 'five years, six years, eleven years, two years, two months, 'two days; some whose term was nearly over, and some 'whose term had only just begun. Women too, under the 'same variety of circumstances. Every prisoner who comes 'into the jail, comes at night; is put into a bath, and 'dressed in the prison garb; and then a black hood is 'drawn over his face and head, and he is led to the cell 'from which he never stirs again until his whole period of 'confinement has expired. I looked at some of them with 'the same awe as I should have looked at men who had 'been buried alive, and dug up again.

WASHINGTON: 1842.

C. D. to J. F.

Solitary prisoners.

How received and kept.

'We dined in the jail: and I told them after dinner 'how much the sight had affected me, and what an awful 'punishment it was. I dwelt upon this; for, although the 'inspectors are extremely kind and benevolent men, I 'question whether they are sufficiently acquainted with the 'human mind to know what it is they are doing. Indeed, 'I am sure they do not know. I bore testimony, as every 'one who sees it must, to the admirable government of the 'institution (Stanfield is the keeper: grown a little 'younger, that's all); but added that nothing could justify 'such a punishment, but its working a reformation in the 'prisoners. That for short terms—say two years for the 'maximum—I conceived, especially after what they had 'told me of its good effects in certain cases, it might 'perhaps be highly beneficial; but that, carried to so great 'an extent, I thought it cruel and unjustifiable; and 'further, that their sentences for small offences were very 'rigorous, not to say savage. All this, they took like men

Talk with the inspectors.

WASHINGTON: 1842.

C. D. to J. F.

'who were really anxious to have one's free opinion, and 'to do right. And we were very much pleased with each 'other, and parted in the friendliest way.

'They sent me back to Philadelphia in a carriage they 'had sent for me in the morning; and then I had to dress

Bookseller Cary.

'in a hurry, and follow Kate to Cary's the bookseller's 'where there was a party. He married a sister of Leslie's. 'There are three Miss Leslies here, very accomplished; 'and one of them has copied all her brother's principal 'pictures. These copies hang about the room. We got 'away from this as soon as we could; and next morning 'had to turn out at five. In the morning I had received

A levee.

'and shaken hands with five hundred people, so you may 'suppose that I was pretty well tired. Indeed I am 'obliged to be very careful of myself; to avoid smoking 'and drinking; to get to bed soon; and to be particular in 'respect of what I eat. . . . You cannot think how bilious 'and trying the climate is. One day it is hot summer,

Changes of temperature.

'without a breath of air; the next, twenty degrees below 'freezing, with a wind blowing that cuts your skin like 'steel. These changes have occurred here several times 'since last Wednesday-night.

'I have altered my route, and don't mean to go to 'Charleston. The country, all the way from here, is 'nothing but a dismal swamp; there is a bad night of 'sea-coasting in the journey; the equinoctial gales are

Henry Clay.

'blowing hard; and Clay (a most *charming* fellow, by the 'bye), whom I have consulted, strongly dissuades me. The 'weather is intensely hot there; the spring fever is coming 'on; and there is very little to see, after all. We there-

'fore go next Wednesday night to Richmond, which we 'shall reach on Thursday. There, we shall stop three 'days; my object being to see some tobacco plantations. 'Then we shall go by James river back to Baltimore, 'which we have already passed through, and where we 'shall stay two days. Then we shall go West at once, 'straight through the most gigantic part of this continent: 'across the Alleghany-mountains, and over a prairie.

WASHINGTON: 1842. C. D. to J. F. Proposed journeyings.

'STILL AT WASHINGTON, Fifteenth March, 1842. . . . 'It is impossible, my dear friend, to tell you what we 'felt, when Mr. Q (who is a fearfully sentimental genius, 'but heartily interested in all that concerns us) came to 'where we were dining last Sunday, and sent in a note to 'the effect that the Caledonia* had arrived! Being really 'assured of her safety, we felt as if the distance between 'us and home were diminished by at least one half. 'There was great joy everywhere here, for she had been 'quite despaired of, but *our* joy was beyond all telling. 'This news came on by express. Last night your letters 'reached us. I was dining with a club (for I can't avoid a 'dinner of that sort, now and then), and Kate sent me a 'note about nine o'clock to say they were here. But she 'didn't open them—which I consider heroic—until I came 'home. That was about half past ten; and we read them 'until nearly two in the morning.

Arrival of Acadia with Caledonia mails.

'I won't say a word about your letters; except that 'Kate and I have come to a conclusion which makes 'me tremble in my shoes, for we decide that humourous 'narrative is your forte, and not statesmen of the common-

Letters from England.

* This was the Acadia with the Caledonia mails.

WASHINGTON: 1842.

C. D. to J. F.

'wealth. I won't say a word about your news; for how 'could I in that case, while you want to hear what we 'are doing, resist the temptation of expending pages on 'those darling children. . . . . .

Congress and Senate.

'I have the privilege of appearing on the floor of both 'houses here, and go to them every day. They are very 'handsome and commodious. There is a great deal of bad 'speaking, but there are a great many very remarkable 'men, in the legislature: such as John Quincey Adams, 'Clay, Preston, Calhoun, and others: with whom I need 'scarcely add I have been placed in the friendliest rela-

Quincey Adams.

'tions. Adams is a fine old fellow—seventy-six years old, 'but with most surprising vigour, memory, readiness, and 'pluck. Clay is perfectly enchanting; an irresistible man. 'There are some very noble specimens, too, out of the

Leading American statesmen.

'West. Splendid men to look at, hard to deceive, prompt 'to act, lions in energy, Crichtons in varied accomplish-'ments, Indians in quickness of eye and gesture, Americans 'in affectionate and generous impulse. It would be 'difficult to exaggerate the nobility of some of these 'glorious fellows.

Preston.

'When Clay retires, as he does this month, Preston will 'become the leader of the whig party. He so solemnly 'assures me that the international copyright shall and will 'be passed, that I almost begin to hope; and I shall be 'entitled to say, if it be, that I have brought it about.

International copyright.

'You have no idea how universal the discussion of its 'merits and demerits has become; or how eager for the 'change I have made a portion of the people.

'You remember what —— was, in England. If you

'*could* but see him here! If you could only have seen 'him when he called on us the other day—feigning 'abstraction in the dreadful pressure of affairs of state; 'rubbing his forehead as one who was a-weary of the 'world; and exhibiting a sublime caricature of Lord 'Burleigh. He is the only thoroughly unreal man I 'have seen, on this side the ocean. Heaven help the 'President! All parties are against him, and he appears 'truly wretched. We go to a levee at his house to-night. 'He has invited me to dinner on Friday, but I am obliged 'to decline; for we leave, per steamboat, to-morrow night.

WASHINGTON: 1842.

C. D. to J. F.

President Tyler.

'I said I wouldn't write anything more concerning the 'American people, for two months. Second thoughts are 'best. I shall not change, and may as well speak out—to '*you*. They are friendly, earnest, hospitable, kind, frank, 'very often accomplished, far less prejudiced than you 'would suppose, warm-hearted, fervent, and enthusiastic. 'They are chivalrous in their universal politeness to women, 'courteous, obliging, disinterested; and, when they conceive 'a perfect affection for a man (as I may venture to say of 'myself), entirely devoted to him. I have received thousands 'of people of all ranks and grades, and have never once 'been asked an offensive or unpolite question—except by 'Englishmen, who, when they have been "located" here 'for some years, are worse than the devil in his blackest 'painting. The State is a parent to its people; has a 'parental care and watch over all poor children, women 'labouring of child, sick persons, and captives. The 'common men render you assistance in the streets, and 'would revolt from the offer of a piece of money. The

Concerning the American people.

Englishmen 'located' in America.

WASHINGTON: 1842.

C. D. to J. F.

'Surgit amari aliquid.'

'desire to oblige is universal; and I have never once 'travelled in a public conveyance, without making some 'generous acquaintance whom I have been sorry to part 'from, and who has in many cases come on miles, to see 'us again. But I don't like the country. I would not 'live here, on any consideration. It goes against the 'grain with me. It would with you. I think it impos- 'sible, utterly impossible, for any Englishman to live here, 'and be happy. I have a confidence that I must be right, 'because I have everything, God knows, to lead me to the 'opposite conclusion: and yet I cannot resist coming to 'this one. As to the causes, they are too many to enter 'upon here. . . . . .

The copyright petition.

'One of two petitions for an international copyright 'which I brought here from American authors, with 'Irving at their head, has been presented to the house 'of representatives. Clay retains the other for presenta- 'tion to the senate after I have left Washington.. The 'presented one has been referred to a committee; the 'Speaker has nominated as its chairman Mr. Kennedy, 'member for Baltimore, who is himself an author and 'notoriously favourable to such a law; and I am going to 'assist him in his report.

'RICHMOND, IN VIRGINIA. Thursday Night, March 17.

RICHMOND.

Washington Irving:

'Irving was with me at Washington yesterday, and '*wept heartily* at parting. He is a fine fellow, when you 'know him well; and you would relish him, my dear friend, 'of all things. We have laughed together at some absur- 'dities we have encountered in company, quite in my

'vociferous Devonshire-terrace style. The "Merrikin" 'government have treated him, he says, most liberally 'and handsomely in every respect. He thinks of sailing 'for Liverpool on the 7th of April; passing a short time 'in London; and then going to Paris. Perhaps you may 'meet him. If you do, he will know that you are my 'dearest friend, and will open his whole heart to you at 'once. His secretary of legation, Mr. Coggleswell, is a 'man of very remarkable information, a great traveller, 'a good talker, and a scholar.

WASHINGTON: 1842.

C. D. to J. F.

appointed Minister to Spain.

'I am going to sketch you our trip here from Washing-'ton, as it involves nine miles of a "Virginny Road." 'That done, I must be brief, good brother. . . .

The reader of the *American Notes* will remember the admirable and most humorous description of the night steamer on the Potomac, and of the black driver over the Virginia-road. Both were in this letter; which, after three days, he resumed 'At Washington again, Monday, March 'the twenty-first.

'We had intended to go to Baltimore from Richmond, 'by a place called Norfolk: but one of the boats being 'under repair, I found we should probably be detained at 'this Norfolk two days. Therefore we came back here 'yesterday, by the road we had travelled before; lay here 'last night; and go on to Baltimore this afternoon, at four 'o'clock. It is a journey of only two hours and a half. 'Richmond is a prettily situated town; but, like other 'towns in slave districts (as the planters themselves admit), 'has an aspect of decay and gloom which to an unaccus-'tomed eye is *most* distressing. In the black car (for they

Richmond.

WASHINGTON: 1842.

C. D. to J. F.

'don't let them sit with the whites), on the railroad as we 'went there, were a mother and family, whom the steamer 'was conveying away, to sell; retaining the man (the 'husband and father I mean) on his plantation. The 'children cried the whole way. Yesterday, on board 'the boat, a slave owner and two constables were our

Incidents of slave-life.

'fellow-passengers. They were coming here in search of 'two negroes who had run away on the previous day. On 'the bridge at Richmond there is a notice against fast 'driving over it, as it is rotten and crazy: penalty—for 'whites, five dollars; for slaves, fifteen stripes. My heart 'is lightened as if a great load had been taken from it, 'when I think that we are turning our backs on this 'accursed and detested system. I really don't think I

Impossible to be silent on slavery.

'could have borne it any longer. It is all very well to say '"be silent on the subject." They won't let you be silent. 'They *will* ask you what you think of it; and *will* expatiate 'on slavery as if it were one of the greatest blessings of 'mankind. "It's not," said a hard, bad-looking fellow to 'me the other day, "it's not the interest of a man to use '"his slaves ill. It's damned nonsense that you hear '"in England."—I told him quietly that it was not a

Discussion with a slave-holder.

'man's interest to get drunk, or to steal, or to game, or to 'indulge in any other vice, but he *did* indulge in it for 'all that. That cruelty, and the abuse of irresponsible 'power, were two of the bad passions of human nature, 'with the gratification of which, considerations of interest 'or of ruin had nothing whatever to do; and that, while 'every candid man must admit that even a slave might 'be happy enough with a good master, all human beings

'knew that bad masters, cruel masters, and masters 'who disgraced the form they bore, were matters of 'experience and history, whose existence was as undis- 'puted as that of slaves themselves. He was a little taken 'aback by this, and asked me if I believed in the bible. 'Yes, I said, but if any man could prove to me that it 'sanctioned slavery, I would place no further credence in it. '"Well then," he said, "by God, sir, the niggers must be '"kept down, and the whites have put down the coloured '"people wherever they have found them." "That's the '"whole question" said I. "Yes, and by God," says he, '"the British had better not stand out on that point when '"Lord Ashburton comes over, for I never felt so warlike as '"I do now,—and that's a fact." I was obliged to accept a 'public supper in this Richmond, and I saw plainly enough, 'there, that the hatred which these Southern States bear 'to us as a nation has been fanned up and revived again 'by this Creole business, and can scarcely be exaggerated.

. . . . 'We were desperately tired at Richmond, as 'we went to a great many places, and received a very 'great number of visitors. We appoint usually two hours 'in every day for this latter purpose, and have our room so 'full at that period that it is difficult to move or breathe. 'Before we left Richmond, a gentleman told me, when I 'really was so exhausted that I could hardly stand, that '"three people of great fashion" were much offended by 'having been told, when they called last evening, that I 'was tired and not visible, then, but would be "at home" 'from twelve to two next day! Another gentleman (no 'doubt of great fashion also) sent a letter to me two hours

WASHINGTON: 1842.

C. D. to J. F.

Feeling of South to England.

Levees at Richmond.

WASHINGTON: 1842.

C. D. to J. F.

'after I had gone to bed, preparatory to rising at four next 'morning, with instructions to the slave who brought it to 'knock me up and wait for an answer!

'I am going to break my resolution of accepting no 'more public entertainments, in favour of the originators 'of the printed document overleaf. They live upon the 'confines of the Indian territory, some two thousand miles 'or more west of New York! Think of my dining there! 'And yet, please God, the festival will come off—I should 'say about the 12th or 15th of next month.' . . . .

One more banquet accepted.

The printed document was a series of resolutions, moved at a public meeting attended by all the principal citizens, judges, professors, and doctors, of St. Louis, urgently inviting, to that city of the Far West, the distinguished writer then the guest of America, eulogizing his genius, and tendering to him their warmest hospitalities. He was at Baltimore when he closed his letter.

'BALTIMORE, *Tuesday, March 22nd.*

'I have a great diffidence in running counter to any 'impression formed by a man of Maclise's genius, on a sub-'ject he has fully considered.' (Referring apparently to some remark by myself on the picture of the Play-scene in *Hamlet*, exhibited this year.) 'But I quite agree with 'you, about the King in *Hamlet*. Talking of Hamlet, I 'constantly carry in my great-coat pocket the *Shakespeare* 'you bought for me in Liverpool. What an unspeakable 'source of delight that book is to me!

My gift of *Shakespeare*.

'Your Ontario letter, I found here to-night: sent on 'by the vigilant and faithful Colden, who makes every

'thing having reference to us, or our affairs, a labour of 'the heartiest love. We devoured its contents, greedily. 'Good Heaven, my dear fellow, how I miss you! and 'how I count the time 'twixt this and coming home again. 'Shall I ever forget the day of our parting at Liverpool! 'when even —— became jolly and radiant in his sympathy 'with our separation! Never, never shall I forget that 'time. Ah! how seriously I thought then, and how 'seriously I have thought many, many times since, of the 'terrible folly of ever quarrelling with a true friend, on 'good for nothing trifles! Every little hasty word that 'has ever passed between us, rose up before me like a 'reproachful ghost. At this great distance, I seem to look 'back upon any miserable small interruption of our affec- 'tionate intercourse, though only for the instant it has 'never outlived, with a sort of pity for myself as if I were 'another creature.

BALTIMORE: 1842.

C. D. to J. F.

Letters from home.

Self-reproach of a noble nature.

'I have bought another accordion. The steward lent 'me one, on the passage out, and I regaled the ladies' 'cabin with my performances. You can't think with 'what feeling I play *Home Sweet Home* every night, or 'how pleasantly sad it makes us. . . . . And so God bless 'you. . . . . I leave space for a short postscript before seal- 'ing this, but it will probably contain nothing. The dear, 'dear children! what a happiness it is to know that they 'are in such hands.

'P.S. Twenty-third March, 1842. Nothing new. And 'all well. I have not heard that the Columbia is in, but 'she is hourly expected. Washington Irving has come

BALTIMORE: 1842.

C. D. to J. F.

'on for another leave-taking,* and dines with me to-day. 'We start for the West, at half after eight to-morrow 'morning. I send you a newspaper, the most respectable 'in the States, with a very just copyright article.'

* At his second visit to America, when in Washington in February 1868, Dickens, replying to a letter in which Irving was named, thus describes the last meeting and leave-taking to which he alludes above. 'Your reference to 'my dear friend, Washington Irving, renews the vivid impressions reawakened 'in my mind at Baltimore but the other day. I saw his fine face for the last 'time in that city. He came there from New York to pass a day or two with 'me before I went westward; and they were made among the most memorable 'of my life by his delightful fancy and genial humor. Some unknown admirer 'of his books and mine sent to the hotel a most enormous mint-julep, wreathed 'with flowers. We sat, one on either side of it, with great solemnity (it filled 'a respectably-sized round table), but the solemnity was of very short dura- 'tion. It was quite an enchanted julep, and carried us among innumerable 'people and places that we both knew. The julep held out far into the night, 'and my memory never saw him afterwards otherwise than as bending over it, 'with his straw, with an attempted air of gravity (after some anecdote involv- 'ing some wonderfully droll and delicate observation of character), and then, 'as his eye caught mine, melting into that captivating laugh of his, which 'was the brightest and best I have ever heard.'

Washington Irving's leave-taking.

CHAPTER XXII.

CANAL BOAT JOURNEYS: BOUND FAR WEST.

1842.

AMERICA: 1842.

Character in the letters

IT would not be possible that a more vivid or exact impression, than that which is derivable from these letters, could be given of either the genius or the character of the writer. The whole man is here in the supreme hour of his life, and in all the enjoyment of its highest sensations. Inexpressibly sad to me has been the task of going over them, but the surprise has equalled the sadness. I had forgotten what was in them. That they contained, in their first vividness, all the most prominent descriptions of his published book, I knew. But the reproduction of any part of these was not permissible here; and believing that the substance of them had been thus almost wholly embodied in the *American Notes*, when they were lent to assist in its composition, I turned to them with very small expectation of finding anything available for present use. Yet the difficulty has been, not to find but to reject; and the rejection when most unavoidable has not been most easy. Even where the subjects recur that are in the printed volume, there is a freshness of first impressions in the letters that renders it no small trial to act strictly on

The *Notes* less satisfactory.

AMERICA: 1842.

the rule adhered to in these extracts from them. In the *Notes* there is of course very much, masterly in observation and description, of which there is elsewhere no trace; but the passages amplified from the letters have not been improved, and the manly force and directness of some of their views and reflections, conveyed by touches of a picturesque completeness that no elaboration could give, have here and there not been strengthened by rhetorical additions in the printed work. There is also a charm in the letters which the plan adopted in the book necessarily excluded from it. It will always of course have value as a deliberate expression of the results gathered from the American experiences, but the *personal narrative* of this famous visit to America is in the letters alone. In what way his experiences arose, the desire at the outset to see nothing that was not favourable, the slowness with which adverse impressions were formed, and the eager recognition of every truthful and noble quality that arose and remained above the fault-finding, are discoverable only in the letters.

A charm in letters excluded from *Notes*.

Personal narrative in them.

Already it is manifest from them that the before-named disappointments, as well of the guest in his entertainers as of the entertainers in their guest, had their beginning in the copyright differences; but it is not less plain that the social dissatisfactions on his side were of even earlier date, and with the country itself had certainly nothing to do. It was objected to him, I well remember, that in making such unfavourable remarks as his published book did on many points, he was assailing the democratic institutions that had formed the character of the nation: but

The copyright differences.

the answer is obvious, that, democratic institutions being universal in America, they were as fairly entitled to share in the good as in the bad; and in what he praised, of which there is here abundant testimony, he must be held to have exalted those institutions as much, as in what he blamed he could be held to depreciate them. He never sets himself up in judgment on the entire people. As we see, from the way the letters show us that the opinions he afterwards published were formed, he does not draw conclusions while his observation is only half-concluded; and he refrains throughout from the example too strongly set him, even in the very terms of his welcome by the writers of America,* of flinging one nation in the other's face. He leaves each upon its own ground. His great business in his publication, as in the first impressions recorded here, is to exhibit social influences at work as he saw them himself; and it would surely have been of all bad compliments the worst, when resolving, in the tone and with the purpose of a friend, to make public what he had observed in America, if he had supposed that such a country would take truth amiss.

AMERICA: 1842.

Social dissatisfactions.

Fairness of judgment.

The real compliment to America.

There is however one thing to be especially remembered, as well in reading the letters as in judging of the book which was founded on them. It is a point to which I believe Mr. Emerson directed the attention of his countrymen. Everything of an objectionable kind, whether the author would have it so or not, stands out more prominently and distinctly than matter of the opposite description. The social sin is a more tangible thing than the

A fact to be remembered.

* See *ante*, p. 282-3.

AMERICA: 1842.

social virtue. Pertinaciously to insist upon the charities and graces of life, is to outrage their quiet and unobtrusive character; but we incur the danger of extending the vulgarities and indecencies, if we seem to countenance by omitting to expose them. And if this is only kept in view in reading what is here given, the proportion of censure will be found not to overbalance the just admiration and unexaggerated praise.

Literary merits of the letters.

Apart from such considerations, it is to be also said, the letters, from which I am now printing exactly as they were written, have claims, as mere literature, of an unusual kind. Unrivalled quickness of observation, the rare faculty of seizing out of a multitude of things the thing only that is essential, the irresistible play of humour, such pathos as only humourists of this high order possess, and the unwearied unforced vivacity of ever fresh, buoyant, bounding animal spirits, never found more natural, variously easy, or picturesque expression. Written amid such distraction, fatigue, and weariness as they describe, amid the jarring noises of hotels and streets, aboard steamers, on canal boats, and in log huts, there is not an erasure in them. Not external objects only, but feelings, reflections, and thoughts, are photographed into visible forms with the same unexampled ease. They borrow no help from the matters of which they treat. They would have given, to the subjects described, old acquaintance and engrossing interest if they had been about a people in the moon. Of the personal character at the same time self-pourtrayed, others, whose emotions it less vividly awakens, will judge more calmly and clearly than

How written.

Personal character pourtrayed.

myself. Yet to myself only can it be known how small were the services of friendship that sufficed to rouse all the sensibilities of this beautiful and noble nature. Throughout our life-long intercourse it was the same. His keenness of discrimination failed him never excepting here, when it was lost in the limitless extent of his appreciation of all kindly things; and never did he receive what was meant for a benefit that he was not eager to return it a hundredfold. No man more truly generous ever lived.

CANAL BOAT FOR PITTSBURGH: 1842.

His next letter was begun from 'on board the canal 'boat. Going to Pittsburgh. Monday, March twenty-'eighth, 1842;' and the difficulties of rejection, to which reference has just been made, have been nowhere felt by me so much. Several of the descriptive masterpieces of the book are in it, with such touches of original freshness as might fairly have justified a reproduction of them in their first form. Among these are the Harrisburgh coach on its way through the Susquehanah valley; the railroad across the mountain; the brown-forester of the Mississippi, the interrogative man in pepper-and-salt, and the affecting scene of the emigrants put ashore as the steamer passes up the Ohio. But all that I may here give, bearing any resemblance to what is given in the *Notes*, are, the opening sketch of the small creature on the top of the queer stage coach, to which the printed version fails to do adequate justice; and an experience to which the interest belongs of having suggested the settlement of Eden in *Martin Chuzzlewit*..... 'We left Baltimore 'last Thursday the twenty-fourth at half-past eight in the

On board.

Choicest passages of *Notes*.

CANAL BOAT FOR PITTSBURGH: 1842.

C. D. to J. F.

'morning, by railroad; and got to a place called York, 'about twelve. There we dined, and took a stage-coach 'for Harrisburgh; twenty-five miles further. This stage-'coach was like nothing so much as the body of one of 'the swings you see at a fair set upon four wheels and 'roofed and covered at the sides with painted canvas. 'There were twelve *inside!* I, thank my stars, was on 'the box. The luggage was on the roof; among it, a 'good-sized dining table, and a big rocking-chair. We 'also took up an intoxicated gentleman, who sat for ten 'miles between me and the coachman; and another in-'toxicated gentleman who got up behind, but in the 'course of a mile or two fell off without hurting himself, 'and was seen in the distant perspective reeling back to 'the grog-shop where we had found him. There were 'four horses to this land-ark, of course; but we did not 'perform the journey until after half-past six o'clock 'that night. . . . The first half of the journey was tame 'enough, but the second lay through the valley of the 'Susquehanah (I think I spell it right, but I haven't 'that American Geography at hand) which is very beau-'tiful. . . . .

Queer stage-coach.

'I think I formerly made a casual remark to you 'touching the precocity of the youth of this country. 'When we changed horses on this journey I got down 'to stretch my legs, refresh myself with a glass of 'whiskey and water, and shake the wet off my great 'coat—for it was raining very heavily, and continued to 'do so, all night. Mounting to my seat again, I observed 'something lying on the roof of the coach, which I took

Something on the roof:

'to be a rather large fiddle in a brown bag. In the course 'of ten miles or so, however, I discovered that it had a 'pair of dirty shoes at one end, and a glazed cap at the 'other; and further observation demonstrated it to be a 'small boy, in a snuff-coloured coat, with his arms quite 'pinioned to his sides by deep forcing into his pockets. 'He was, I presume, a relative or friend of the coach- 'man's, as he lay a-top of the luggage, with his face 'towards the rain; and, except when a change of position 'brought his shoes in contact with my hat, he appeared 'to be asleep. Sir, when we stopped to water the horses, 'about two miles from Harrisburgh, this thing slowly 'upreared itself to the height of three foot eight, and 'fixing its eyes on me with a mingled expression of 'complacency, patronage, national independence, and 'sympathy for all outer barbarians and foreigners, said, 'in shrill piping accents, "Well now, stranger, I guess '"you find this, a'most like an English a'ternoon,—hey?" 'It is unnecessary to add that I thirsted for his blood. . . .

CANAL BOAT FOR PITTSBURGH: 1842.

C. D. to J. F.

reveals itself.

'We had all next morning in Harrisburgh, as the canal- 'boat was not to start until three o'clock in the afternoon. 'The officials called upon me before I had finished break- 'fast; and as the town is the seat of the Pennsylvanian 'legislature, I went up to the capitol. I was very much 'interested in looking over a number of treaties made 'with the poor Indians, their signatures being rough 'drawings of the creatures or weapons they are called 'after; and the extraordinary drawing of these emblems, 'showing the queer, unused, shaky manner in which 'each man has held the pen, struck me very much.

At Harrisburgh.

Treaties with Indians.

CANAL BOAT FOR PITTSBURGH: 1842.

C. D. to J. F.

Local legislatures.

A levee.

'You know my small respect for our house of commons. These local legislatures are too insufferably apish of mighty legislation, to be seen without bile; for which reason, and because a great crowd of senators and ladies had assembled in both houses to behold the inimitable, and had already begun to pour in upon him even in the secretary's private room, I went back to the hotel, with all speed. The members of both branches of the legislature followed me there, however, so we had to hold the usual levee before our half-past one o'clock dinner. We received a great number of them. Pretty nearly every man spat upon the carpet, as usual; and one blew his nose with his fingers—also on the carpet, which was a very neat one, the room given up to us being the private parlor of the landlord's wife. This has become so common since, however, that it scarcely seems worth mentioning. Please to observe that the gentleman in question was a member of the senate, which answers (as they very often tell me) to our house of lords.

A model-innkeeper.

'The innkeeper was the most attentive, civil, and obliging person I ever saw in my life. On being asked for his bill, he said there was no bill: the honor and pleasure &c. being more than sufficient.* I did not permit this, of course; and begged Mr. Q to explain to him, that, travelling four strong, I could not hear of it on any account.

The canal boat.

'And now I come to the Canal Boat. Bless your heart and soul, my dear fellow,—if you could only see us on board

* Miss Martineau was perhaps partly right then? *Ante*, p. 325.

'the canal boat! Let me think, for a moment, at what
'time of the day or night I should best like you to see us.
'In the morning? Between five and six in the morning,
'shall I say? Well! you *would* like to see me, standing
'on the deck, fishing the dirty water out of the canal with
'a tin ladle chained to the boat by a long chain; pouring
'the same into a tin-basin (also chained up in like manner);
'and scrubbing my face with the jack towel. At night,
'shall I say? I don't know that you *would* like to look
'into the cabin at night, only to see me lying on a
'temporary shelf exactly the width of this sheet of paper
'when it's open (*I measured it this morning*),* with one
'man above me, and another below; and, in all, eight and
'twenty in a low cabin, which you can't stand upright in
'with your hat on. I don't think you would like to look
'in at breakfast time either, for then these shelves have
'only just been taken down and put away, and the
'atmosphere of the place is, as you may suppose, by no
'means fresh; though there *are* upon the table tea and
'coffee, and bread and butter, and salmon, and shad, and
'liver, and steak, and potatoes, and pickles, and ham, and
'pudding, and sausages; and three and thirty people
'sitting round it, eating and drinking; and savoury bottles
'of gin, and whiskey, and brandy, and rum, in the bar
'hard by; and seven and twenty out of the eight and
'twenty men, in foul linen, with yellow streams from half-
'chewed tobacco trickling down their chins. Perhaps
'the best time for you to take a peep would be the
'present: eleven o'clock in the forenoon: when the barber

CANAL BOAT FOR PITTSBURGH: 1842.

C. D. to J. F.

In the morning.

At night.

At breakfast.

After breakfast.

* 16 inches exactly.

CANAL BOAT FOR PITTSBURGH: 1842.

C. D. to J. F.

'is at his shaving, and the gentlemen are lounging about 'the stove waiting for their turns, and not more than 'seventeen are spitting in concert, and two or three are 'walking overhead (lying down on the luggage every time 'the man at the helm calls "Bridge!"), and I am writing 'this in the ladies'-cabin, which is a part of the gentle- 'men's, and only screened off by a red curtain. Indeed it 'exactly resembles the dwarf's private apartment in a 'caravan at a fair; and the gentlemen, generally, repre- 'sent the spectators at a penny-a-head. The place is just 'as clean and just as large as that caravan you and I were 'in at Greenwich-fair last past. Outside, it is exactly like 'any canal-boat you have seen near the Regent's-park, or 'elsewhere.

The ladies' cabin.

'You never can conceive what the hawking and spitting 'is, the whole night through. Last night was the worst. '*Upon my honor and word* I was obliged, this morning, 'to lay my fur-coat on the deck, and wipe the half dried 'flakes of spittle from it with my handkerchief: and the 'only surprise seemed to be, that I should consider it 'necessary to do so. When I turned in last night, I put 'it on a stool beside me, and there it lay, under a cross fire 'from five men—three opposite; one above; and one 'below. I make no complaints, and shew no disgust. I 'am looked upon as highly facetious at night, for I crack 'jokes with everybody near me until we fall asleep. 'am considered very hardy in the morning, for I run up, 'bare-necked, and plunge my head into the half-frozen 'water, by half past five o'clock. I am respected fo 'activity, inasmuch as I jump from the boat to the tow

Disagreeable.

Making the best of it.

Hardy habits.

'path, and walk five or six miles before breakfast; keeping 'up with the horses all the time. In a word, they are 'quite astonished to find a sedentary Englishman roughing 'it so well, and taking so much exercise; and question me 'very much on that head. The greater part of the men 'will sit and shiver round the stove all day, rather than 'put one foot before the other. As to having a window 'open, that's not to be thought of.

CANAL BOAT FOR PITTSBURGH: 1842.

C. D. to J. F.

'We expect to reach Pittsburgh to-night, between eight 'and nine o'clock; and there we ardently hope to find your 'March letters awaiting us. We have had, with the excep- 'tion of Friday afternoon, exquisite weather, but cold. 'Clear starlight and moonlight nights. The canal has run, 'for the most part, by the side of the Susquehanah and 'Iwanata rivers; and has been carried through tremendous 'obstacles. Yesterday, we crossed the mountain. This 'is done *by railroad*. . . . You dine at an inn upon the 'mountain; and, including the half hour allowed for the 'meal, are rather more than five hours performing this 'strange part of the journey. The people north and '"down east" have terrible legends of its danger; but 'they appear to be exceedingly careful, and don't go to 'work at all wildly. There are some queer precipices close 'to the rails, certainly; but every precaution is taken, 'I am inclined to think, that such difficulties, and such a 'vast work, will admit of.

By rail across a mountain.

'The scenery, before you reach the mountains, and 'when you are on them, and after you have left them, is 'very grand and fine; and the canal winds its way through 'some deep, sullen gorges, which, seen by moonlight, are

Mountain scenery.

CANAL BOAT FOR PITTSBURGH: 1842.

C. D. to J. F.

'very impressive: though immeasurably inferior to Glencoe,
'to whose terrors I have not seen the smallest *approach*.
'We have passed, both in the mountains and elsewhere,
'a great number of new settlements, and detached log-
'houses. Their utterly forlorn and miserable appearance

New settlers.

'baffles all description. I have not seen six cabins out of
'six hundred, where the windows have been whole. Old
'hats, old clothes, old boards, old fragments of blanket
'and paper, are stuffed into the broken glass; and their
'air is misery and desolation. It pains the eye to see the

Original of *Chuzzlewit* settlement.

'stumps of great trees thickly strewn in every field of
'wheat; and never to lose the eternal swamp and dull
'morass, with hundreds of rotten trunks, of elm and pine
'and sycamore and logwood, steeped in its unwholesome
'water; where the frogs so croak at night that after dark
'there is an incessant sound as if millions of phantom
'teams, with bells, were travelling through the upper air,
'at an enormous distance off. It is quite an oppressive
'circumstance, too, to *come* upon great tracks, where
'settlers have been burning down the trees; and where
'their wounded bodies lie about, like those of murdered
'creatures; while here and there some charred and
'blackened giant rears two bare arms aloft, and seems to

View from heights of a mountain.

'curse his enemies. The prettiest sight I have seen was
'yesterday, when we—on the heights of the mountain,
'and in a keen wind—looked down into a valley full of
'light and softness: catching glimpses of scattered cabins;
'children running to the doors; dogs bursting out to
'bark; pigs scampering home, like so many prodigal
'sons; families sitting out in their gardens; cows gazing

'upward, with a stupid indifference; men in their shirt-
'sleeves, looking on at their unfinished houses, and plan-
'ning work for to-morrow;—and the train riding on, high
'above them, like a storm. But I know this is beautiful—
'very—very beautiful!

CANAL BOAT FOR PITTSBURGH: 1842.

C. D. to J. F.

'. . I wonder whether you and Mac mean to go to Green-
'wich-fair! Perhaps you dine at the Crown-and-sceptre
'to-day, for it's Easter-Monday—who knows! I wish you
'drank punch, dear Forster. It's a shabby thing, not to
'be able to picture you with that cool green glass . . .

'I told you of the many uses of the word "fix." I
'ask Mr. Q on board a steamboat if breakfast be nearly
'ready, and he tells me yes he should think so, for when
'he was last below the steward was "fixing the tables"
'—in other words, laying the cloth. When we have
'been writing, and I beg him (do you remember any-
'thing of my love of order, at this distance of time?)
'to collect our papers, he answers that he'll "fix 'em
'"presently." So when a man's dressing he's "fixing"
'himself, and when you put yourself under a doctor he
'"fixes" you in no time. T'other night, before we came on
'board here, when I had ordered a bottle of mulled claret
'and waited some time for it, it was put on table with an
'apology from the landlord (a lieutenant-colonel) that
'"he feared it wasn't fixed properly." And here, on
'Saturday morning, a Western man, handing the potatoes
'to Mr. Q at breakfast, enquired if he wouldn't take some
'of "these fixings" with his meat. I remained as grave
'as a judge. I catch them looking at me sometimes, and
'feel that they think I don't take any notice. Politics

Useful word.

Fixings.

STEAM BOAT TO CINCINNATI: 1842.

'are very high here; dreadfully strong; handbills, denun-
'ciations, invectives, threats, and quarrels. The question
'is, who shall be the next President. The election comes
'off in *three years and a half* from this time.'

C. D. to J. F.

He resumed his letter, 'on board the steam boat from
Party in America.
'Pittsburgh to Cincinnati, April the first, 1842. A very
'tremulous steam boat, which makes my hand shake.
'This morning, my dear friend, this very morning, which,
'passing by without bringing news from England, would
'have seen us on our way to St. Louis (viâ Cincin-
'nati and Louisville) with sad hearts and dejected coun-
'tenances, and the prospect of remaining for at least three
'weeks longer without any intelligence of those so inex-
'pressibly dear to us—this very morning, bright and
'lucky morning that it was, a great packet was brought
News from home.
'to our bed-room door, from HOME. How I have read
'and re-read your affectionate, hearty, interesting, funny,
'serious, delightful, and thoroughly Forsterian Columbia
'letter, I will not attempt to tell you; or how glad I am
'that you liked my first; or how afraid I am that my
'second was not written in such good spirits as it should
'have been; or how glad I am again to think that my
'third *was;* or how I hope you will find some amusement
'from my fourth: this present missive. All this, and
'more affectionate and earnest words than the post office
'would convey at any price, though they have no sharp
'edges to hurt the stamping-clerk—you will understand, I
'know, without expression, or attempt at expression. So
'having got over the first agitation of so much pleasure;
'and having walked the deck; and being now in the

'cabin, where one party are playing at chess, and another 'party are asleep, and another are talking round the stove, 'and all are spitting; and a persevering bore of a horrible 'New Englander with a droning voice like a gigantic 'bee *will* sit down beside me, though I am writing, and 'talk incessantly, in my very ear, to Kate;—here goes 'again.

STEAM BOAT TO CINCINNATI: 1842.

C. D. to J. F.

'Let me see. I should tell you, first, that we got to Pitts- 'burgh between eight and nine o'clock of the evening of 'the day on which I left off at the top of this sheet; and 'were there received by a little man (a very little man) 'whom I knew years ago in London. He rejoiceth in the 'name of D G; and, when I knew him, was in partner- 'ship with his father on the stock-exchange, and lived 'handsomely at Dalston. They failed in business soon 'afterwards, and then this little man began to turn to 'account what had previously been his amusement and 'accomplishment, by painting little subjects for the fancy 'shops. So I lost sight of him, nearly ten years ago; and 'here he turned up 'tother day, as a portrait painter in 'Pittsburgh! He had previously written me a letter 'which moved me a good deal, by a kind of quiet independ- 'ence and contentment it breathed, and still a painful 'sense of being alone, so very far from home. I received 'it in Philadelphia, and answered it. He dined with us 'every day of our stay in Pittsburgh (they were only three), 'and was truly gratified and delighted to find me unchanged '—more so than I can tell you. I am very glad to-night 'to think how much happiness we have fortunately been 'able to give him.

At Pittsburgh.

Meets an early acquaintance.

'Smallness of the world.'

STEAM BOAT TO CINCINNATI: 1842.

C. D. to J. F.

Of Pittsburgh.

'Pittsburgh is like Birmingham—at least its townsfolks 'say so; and I didn't contradict them. It is, in one respect. 'There is a great deal of smoke in it. I quite offended a 'man at our yesterday's levee, who supposed I was "now '"quite at home," by telling him that the notion of London 'being so dark a place was a popular mistake. We had 'very queer customers at our receptions, I do assure you. 'Not least among them, a gentleman with his inexpressibles 'imperfectly buttoned and his waistband resting on his 'thighs, who stood behind the half-opened door, and could 'by no temptation or inducement be prevailed upon to 'come out. There was also another gentleman, with one 'eye and one fixed gooseberry, who stood in a corner, 'motionless like an eight-day clock, and glared upon me, 'as I courteously received the Pittsburgians. There were 'also two red-headed brothers—boys—young dragons 'rather—who hovered about Kate, and wouldn't go. A 'great crowd they were, for three days; and a very queer 'one.'

Queer customers at the levees

'STILL IN THE SAME BOAT. *April the Second*, 1842.

Our anniversary.

'Many, many, happy returns of the day. It's only 'eight o'clock in the morning now, but we mean to drink 'your health after dinner, in a bumper; and scores of 'Richmond dinners to us! We have some wine (a present 'sent on board by our Pittsburgh landlord) in our own 'cabin; and we shall tap it to good purpose, I assure you; 'wishing you all manner and kinds of happiness, and a long 'life to ourselves that we may be partakers of it. We have 'wondered a hundred times already, whether you and Mac 'will dine anywhere together, in honour of the day. I say

'yes, but Kate says no. She predicts that you'll ask 'Mac, and he won't go. I have not yet heard from 'him.

STEAM BOAT TO CINCINNATI: 1842.

C. D. to J. F.

'We have a better cabin here, than we had on board 'the Britannia; the berths being much wider, and the 'den having two doors: one opening on the ladies' cabin, 'and one upon a little gallery in the stern of the boat. 'We expect to be at Cincinnati some time on Monday 'morning, and we carry about fifty passengers. The cabin 'for meals goes right through the boat, from the prow to 'the stern, and is very long; only a small portion of it being 'divided off, by a partition of wood and ground-glass, for 'the ladies. We breakfast at half after seven, dine at one, 'and sup at six. Nobody will sit down to any one of these 'meals, though the dishes are smoking on the board, until 'the ladies have appeared, and taken their chairs. It was 'the same in the canal boat.

The Cincinnati steamer.

Deference to ladies.

'The washing department is a little more civilized than 'it was on the canal, but bad is the best. Indeed the 'Americans when they are travelling, as Miss Martineau 'seems disposed to admit, are exceedingly negligent: not 'to say dirty. To the best of my making out, the ladies, 'under most circumstances, are content with smearing 'their hands and faces in a very small quantity of water. 'So are the men; who superadd to that mode of ablution, 'a hasty use of the common brush and comb. It is quite 'a practice, too, to wear but one cotton shirt a week, and 'three or four fine linen *fronts*. Anne reports that this 'is Mr. Q's course of proceeding: and my portrait-paint-'ing friend told me that it was the case with pretty nearly

Frugality in water and linen.

STEAM BOAT TO CINCINNATI: 1842.

'all his sitters; so that when he bought a piece of cloth 'not long ago, and instructed the sempstress to make it '*all* into shirts, not fronts, she thought him deranged.

C. D. to J. F.

'My friend the New Englander, of whom I wrote last 'night, is perhaps the most intolerable bore on this vast 'continent. He drones, and snuffles, and writes poems, 'and talks small philosophy and metaphysics, and never '*will* be quiet, under any circumstances. He is going to 'a great temperance convention at Cincinnati; along 'with a doctor of whom I saw something at Pitts-'burgh. The doctor, in addition to being everything that 'the New Englander is, is a phrenologist besides. I dodge 'them about the boat. Whenever I appear on deck, I see 'them bearing down upon me—and fly. The New Eng-'lander was very anxious last night that he and I should '"form a magnetic chain," and magnetize the doctor, for 'the benefit of all incredulous passengers; but I declined 'on the plea of tremendous occupation in the way of letter-'writing.

Magnetic experiments.

'And speaking of magnetism, let me tell you that 'the other night at Pittsburgh, there being present 'only Mr. Q and the portrait-painter, Kate sat down, 'laughing, for me to try my hand upon her. I had 'been holding forth upon the subject rather luminously, 'and asserting that I thought I could exercise the influ-'ence, but had never tried. In six minutes, I magnetized 'her into hysterics, and then into the magnetic sleep. I 'tried again next night, and she fell into the slumber in 'little more than two minutes. . . . I can wake her with 'perfect ease; but I confess (not being prepared for any-

'thing so sudden and complete), I was on the first occa-
'sion rather alarmed. . . . The Western parts being
'sometimes hazardous, I have fitted out the whole of my.
'little company with LIFE PRESERVERS, which I inflate
'with great solemnity when we get aboard any boat,
'and keep, as Mrs. Cluppins did her umbrella in the
'court of common pleas, ready for use upon a moment's
'notice.'. . .

STEAM BOAT TO CINCINNATI: 1842.

C. D. to J. F.

Life preservers.

He resumed his letter, on 'Sunday, April the third,' with allusion to a general who had called upon him in Washington with two literary ladies, and had written to him next day for an immediate interview, as 'the two LL's' were ambitious of the honour of a personal introduction. 'Besides the doctor and the dread New Englander, we 'have on board that valiant general who wrote to me 'about the "two LL's." He is an old, old man with a 'weazen face, and the remains of a pigeon-breast in his 'military surtout. He is acutely gentlemanly and officer-'like. The breast has so subsided, and the face has 'become so strongly marked, that he seems, like a pigeon-'pie, to show only the feet of the bird outside, and to keep 'the rest to himself. He is perhaps *the* most horrible bore 'in this country. And I am quite serious when I say that 'I do not believe there are, on the whole earth besides, 'so many intensified bores as in these United States. No 'man can form an adequate idea of the real meaning of 'the word, without coming here. There are no particular 'characters on board, with these three exceptions. Indeed 'I seldom see the passengers but at meal-times, as I read 'and write in our own little state room. . . . I have

STEAM BOAT TO CINCINNATI: 1842.

C. D. to J. F.

'smuggled two chairs into our crib; and write this on 'a book upon my knee. Everything is in the neatest 'order, of course; and my shaving tackle, dressing case, 'brushes, books, and papers, are arranged with as much 'precision as if we were going to remain here a month. 'Thank God we are not.

Habits of neatness.

'The average width of the river rather exceeds that of 'the Thames at Greenwich. In parts it is much broader; 'and then there is usually a green island, covered with 'trees, dividing it into two streams. Occasionally we stop 'for a few minutes at a small town, or village (I ought to

The Ohio.

'say city, everything is a city here); but the banks are 'for the most part deep solitudes, overgrown with trees, 'which, in these western latitudes, are already in leaf, 'and very green .....

'All this I see, as I write, from the little door into the 'stern-gallery which I mentioned just now. It don't 'happen six times in a day that any other passenger 'comes near it; and, as the weather is amply warm enough 'to admit of our sitting with it open, here we remain from 'morning until night: reading, writing, talking. What 'our theme of conversation is, I need not tell you. No

Wearying for home.

'beauty or variety makes us weary less for home. We 'count the days, and say, "When May comes, and we can '"say—*next month*—the time will seem almost gone." 'We are never tired of imagining what you are all about. 'I allow of no calculation for the difference of clocks, but 'insist on a corresponding minute in London. It is much

2nd April

'the shortest way, and best. . . . Yesterday, we drank your 'health and many happy returns—in wine, after dinner;

'in a small milk-pot jug of gin-punch, a night. And 'when I made a temporary table, to hold the little candle-'stick, of one of my dressing-case trays; cunningly inserted 'under the mattress of my berth with a weight a-top of it 'to keep it in its place, so that it made a perfectly exqui-'site bracket; we agreed, that, please God, this should be 'a joke at the Star-and-garter on the second of April 'eighteen hundred and forty-three. If your blank *can* 'be surpassed . . . believe me ours transcends it. My 'heart gets, sometimes, SORE for home.

STEAM BOAT TO CINCINNATI: 1842.

C. D. to J. F.

'At Pittsburgh I saw another solitary confinement 'prison: Pittsburgh being also in Pennsylvania. A 'horrible thought occurred to me when I was recalling 'all I had seen, that night. *What if ghosts be one of the 'terrors of these jails?* I have pondered on it often, since 'then. The utter solitude by day and night; the many 'hours of darkness; the silence of death; the mind for 'ever brooding on melancholy themes, and having no 'relief; sometimes an evil conscience very busy; imagine 'a prisoner covering up his head in the bedclothes and 'looking out from time to time, with a ghastly dread of 'some inexplicable silent figure that always sits upon his 'bed, or stands (if a thing can be said to stand, that never 'walks as men do) in the same corner of his cell. The 'more I think of it, the more certain I feel that not 'a few of these men (during a portion of their im-'prisonment at least) are nightly visited by spectres. I 'did ask one man in this last jail, if he dreamed much. 'He gave me a most extraordinary look, and said— 'under his breath—in a whisper—"No." . . .

Another solitary prison.

New terror to solitude.

CINCINNATI: 1842.

C. D. to J. F.

'CINCINNATI. *Fourth April*, 1842.

'We arrived here this morning: about three o'clock, 'I believe, but I was fast asleep in my berth. I turned 'out soon after six, dressed, and breakfasted on board. 'About half after eight, we came ashore and drove to 'the hotel, to which we had written on from Pittsburgh 'ordering rooms; and which is within a stone's throw of 'the boat wharf. Before I had issued an official notifi-

Two judges in attendance.

'cation that we were "not at home," two Judges called, 'on the part of the inhabitants, to know when we would 'receive the townspeople. We appointed to-morrow 'morning, from half-past eleven to one; arranged to go 'out, with these two gentlemen, to see the town, *at* one; 'and were fixed for an evening party to-morrow night at 'the house of one of them. On Wednesday morning we 'go on by the mail-boat to Louisville, a trip of fourteen 'hours; and from that place proceed in the next good 'boat to St. Louis, which is a voyage of four days. Finding 'from my judicial friends (well-informed and most agree- 'able gentlemen) this morning, that the prairie travel to

Change of route.

'Chicago is a very fatiguing one, and that the lakes are 'stormy, sea-sicky, and not over-safe at this season, I 'wrote by our captain to St. Louis (for the boat that 'brought us here goes on there) to the effect that I 'should not take the lake route, but should come back 'here; and should visit the prairies, which are within 'thirty miles of St. Louis, immediately on my arrival 'there. . . . .

'I have walked to the window, since I turned this page, 'to see what aspect the town wears. We are in a wide

'street: paved in the carriage way with small white 'stones, and in the footway with small red tiles. The 'houses are for the most part one story high; some are 'of wood; others of a clean white brick. Nearly all 'have green blinds outside every window. The principal 'shops over the way, are, according to the inscriptions 'over them, a Large Bread Bakery; a Book Bindery; 'a Dry Goods Store; and a Carriage Repository; the last 'named establishment looking very like an exceedingly 'small retail coal-shed. On the pavement under our 'window, a black man is chopping wood; and another 'black man is talking (confidentially) to a pig. The 'public table, at this hotel and at the hotel opposite, 'has just now finished dinner. The diners are collected 'on the pavement, on both sides of the way, picking their 'teeth, and talking. The day being warm, some of them 'have brought chairs into the street. Some are on three 'chairs; some on two; and some, in defiance of all known 'laws of gravity, are sitting quite comfortably on one: with 'three of the chair's legs, and their own two, high up in 'the air. The loungers, underneath our window, are 'talking of a great Temperance convention which comes 'off here to-morrow. Others, about me. Others, about 'England. Sir Robert Peel is popular here, with every-'body.

CINCINNATI: 1842.

C. D. to J. F.

Description of the city.

On the pavement.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE FAR WEST: TO NIAGARA FALLS.

1842.

THE next letter described his experiences in the Far West, his stay in St. Louis, his visit to a Prairie, the return to Cincinnati, and, after a stage-coach ride from that city to Columbus, the travel thence to Sandusky, and so, by Lake Erie, to the Falls of Niagara. All these subjects appear in the *Notes*, but nothing printed there is repeated in the extracts now to be given. Of the closing passages of his journey, when he turned from Columbus in the direction of home, the story, here for the first time told, is in his most characteristic vein; the account that will be found of the Prairie will probably be preferred to what is given in the *Notes;* the Cincinnati sketches are very pleasant; and even such a description as that of the Niagara Falls, of which so much is made in the book, has here an independent novelty and freshness. The first vividness is in his letter. The naturalness of associating no image or sense but of repose, with a grandeur so mighty and resistless, is best presented suddenly; and, in a few words, we have the material as well as moral beauty of a scene unrivalled in its kind upon the earth. The instant impression we find to be worth more than the eloquent recollection.

Descriptions in letters and in *Notes*.

Back to Cincinnati: 1842.

C. D. to J. F.

The captain of the boat that had dropped them at Cincinnati and gone to St. Louis, had stayed in the latter place until they were able to join and return with him; this letter bears date accordingly, 'On board the Messenger 'again. Going from St. Louis back to Cincinnati. Friday, 'fifteenth April, 1842;' and its first paragraph is an outline of the movements which it afterwards describes in detail. 'We remained in Cincinnati one whole day 'after the date of my last, and left on Wednesday morning 'the 6th. We reached Louisville soon after midnight on 'the same night; and slept there. Next day at one 'o'clock we put ourselves on board another steamer, 'and travelled on until last Sunday evening the tenth; 'when we reached St. Louis at about nine o'clock. The 'next day we devoted to seeing the city. Next day, 'Tuesday the twelfth, I started off with a party of men '(we were fourteen in all) to see a prairie; returned to 'St. Louis about noon on the thirteenth; attended a 'soirée and ball—not a dinner—given in my honor that 'night; and yesterday afternoon at four o'clock we turned 'our faces homewards. Thank Heaven!

Outline of westward travel.

An Arabian-night city.

'Cincinnati is only fifty years old, but is a very beauti- 'ful city: I think the prettiest place I have seen here, 'except Boston. It has risen out of the forest like an 'Arabian-night city; is well laid out; ornamented in the 'suburbs with pretty villas; and above all, for this is 'a very rare feature in America, has smooth turf-plots 'and well kept gardens. There happened to be a great 'temperance festival; and the procession mustered under, 'and passed, our windows early in the morning. I

Temperance festival.

BACK TO CINCINNATI: 1842.

C. D. to J. F.

'suppose they were twenty thousand strong, at least. 'Some of the banners were quaint and odd enough. The 'ship-carpenters, for instance, displayed on one side of 'their flag, the good Ship Temperance in full sail; on the 'other, the Steamer Alcohol blowing up sky-high. The 'Irishmen had a portrait of Father Mathew, you may be 'sure. And Washington's broad lower jaw (by the bye, 'Washington had not a pleasant face) figured in all parts 'of the ranks. In a kind of square at one outskirt of the 'city, they divided into bodies, and were addressed by

Dry speaking.

'different speakers. Drier speaking I never heard. I 'own that I felt quite uncomfortable to think they could 'take the taste of it out of their mouths with nothing better 'than water.'

A party at Judge Walker's.

'In the evening we went to a party at Judge Walker's, 'and were introduced to at least one hundred and fifty 'first-rate bores, separately and singly. I was required 'to sit down by the greater part of them, and talk!* In

* A young lady's account of this party, written next morning, and quoted in one of the American memoirs of Dickens, enables us to contemplate his suffering from the point of view of those who inflicted it. 'I went last evening to a 'party at Judge Walker's, given to the hero of the day. . . . When we 'reached the house Mr. Dickens had left the crowded rooms, and was in the 'hall with his wife, about taking his departure when we entered the door. 'We were introduced to him in our wrapping; and in the flurry and embarrass-'ment of the meeting, one of the party dropped a parcel, containing shoes,

The party from another view.

'gloves, &c. Mr. Dickens, stooping, gathered them up and restored them with 'a laughing remark, and we bounded upstairs to get our things off. Hastening 'down again, we found him with Mrs. Dickens seated upon a sofa, surrounded 'by a group of ladies; Judge Walker having requested him to delay his 'departure for a few moments, for the gratification of some tardy friends 'who had just arrived, ourselves among the number. Declining to re-enter 'the rooms where he had already taken leave of the guests, he had seated 'himself in the hall. He is young and handsome, has a mellow, beautiful

the night we were serenaded (as we usually are in every place we come to), and very well serenaded, I assure you. But we were very much knocked up. I really think my face has acquired a fixed expression of sadness from 'the constant and unmitigated boring I endure. The 'LL's have carried away all my cheerfulness. There 'is a line in my chin (on the right side of the under-lip), 'indelibly fixed there by the New-Englander I told you 'of in my last. I have the print of a crow's foot on the 'outside of my left eye, which I attribute to the literary 'characters of small towns. A dimple has vanished from 'my cheek, which I felt myself robbed of at the time by

BACK TO CINCINNATI: 1842.

C. D. to J. F.

Mournful results of boredom.

'eye, fine brow, and abundant hair. His mouth is large, and his smile so 'bright it seemed to shed light and happiness all about him. His manner is 'easy, negligent, but not elegant. His dress was foppish; in fact, he was 'overdressed, yet his garments were worn so easily they appeared to be a 'necessary part of him. (!) He had a dark coat, with lighter pantaloons; a 'black waistcoat, embroidered with colored flowers; and about his neck, 'covering his white shirt-front, was a black neckcloth, also embroidered in 'colors, in which were placed two large diamond pins connected by a chain. 'A gold watch-chain, and a large red rose in his button-hole, completed his 'toilet. He appeared a little weary, but answered the remarks made to him '—for he originated none—in an agreeable manner. Mr. Beard's portrait 'of Fagin was so placed in the room that we could see it from where we stood 'surrounding him. One of the ladies asked him if it was his idea of the Jew. 'He replied, "Very nearly." Another, laughingly, requested that he would 'give her the rose he wore, as a memento. He shook his head and said: '"That will not do; he could not give it to one; the others would be '"jealous." A half dozen then insisted on having it, whereupon he proposed 'to divide the leaves among them. In taking the rose from his coat, either 'by design or accident, the leaves loosened and fell upon the floor, and amid 'considerable laughter the ladies stooped and gathered them. He remained 'some twenty minutes, perhaps, in the hall, and then took his leave. I must 'confess to considerable disappointment in the personal of my idol. I felt 'that his throne was shaken, although it never could be destroyed.' This appalling picture supplements and very sufficiently explains the mournful passage in the text.

Young lady's description of C. D.

FROM CINCINNATI TO ST. LOUIS: 1842.

C. D. to J. F.

'a wise legislator. But on the other hand I am really 'indebted for a good broad grin to P.. E.., literary critic of 'Philadelphia, and sole proprietor of the English language 'in its grammatical and idiomatical purity; to P.. E.., with 'the shiny straight hair and turned-down shirt collar, who 'taketh all of us English men of letters to task in print, 'roundly and uncompromisingly, but told me, at the same 'time, that I had "awakened a new era" in his mind. . . .

'The last 200 miles of the voyage from Cincinnati to 'St. Louis are upon the Mississippi, for you come down 'the Ohio to its mouth. It is well for society that this 'Mississippi, the renowned father of waters, had no children 'who take after him. It is the beastliest river in the 'world.' . . . (His description is in the *Notes*.)

Down the Mississippi.

'Conceive the pleasure of rushing down this stream by 'night (as we did last night) at the rate of fifteen miles 'an hour; striking against floating blocks of timber 'every instant; and dreading some infernal blow at every 'bump. The helmsman in these boats is in a little glass-'house upon the roof. In the Mississippi, another man 'stands in the very head of the vessel, listening and

Listening and watching.

'watching intently; listening, because they can tell in 'dark nights by the noise when any great obstruction is at 'hand. This man holds the rope of a large bell which 'hangs close to the wheel-house, and whenever he pulls it, 'the engine is to stop directly, and not to stir until he 'rings again. Last night, this bell rang at least once in 'every five minutes; and at each alarm there was a 'concussion which nearly flung one out of bed. . . . While I 'have been writing this account, we have shot out of that

'hideous river, thanks be to God; never to see it again, I 'hope, but in a nightmare. We are now on the smooth 'Ohio, and the change is like the transition from pain to 'perfect ease. ST. LOUIS: 1842. C. D. to J. F.

'We had a very crowded levee in St. Louis. Of course 'the paper had an account of it. If I were to drop a letter 'in the street, it would be in the newspaper next day, 'and nobody would think its publication an outrage. The 'editor objected to my hair, as not curling sufficiently. 'He admitted an eye; but objected again to dress, as 'being somewhat foppish, "and indeed perhaps rather '"flash."—"But such," he benevolently adds, "are the '"differences between American and English taste— '"rendered more apparent, perhaps, by all the other '"gentlemen present being dressed in black." Oh, that 'you could have seen the other gentlemen! . . . . A levee at St. Louis.

'A St. Louis lady complimented Kate upon her voice 'and manner of speaking: assuring her that she should 'never have suspected her of being Scotch, or even 'English. She was so obliging as to add that she would 'have taken her for an American, anywhere: which she '(Kate) was no doubt aware was a very great compliment, 'as the Americans were admitted on all hands to have 'greatly refined upon the English language! I need not 'tell you that out of Boston and New York a nasal drawl 'is universal, but I may as well hint that the prevailing 'grammar is also more than doubtful; that the oddest 'vulgarisms are received idioms; that all the women who 'have been bred in slave-states speak more or less like 'negroes, from having been constantly in their childhood Compliments. Peculiarities of speech.

St. Louis: 1842.

C. D. to J. F.

'with black nurses; and that the most fashionable and 'aristocratic (these are two words in great use), instead of 'asking you in what place you were born, enquire where 'you "hail from?"!!'.

'Lord Ashburton arrived at Annapolis t'other day, after 'a voyage of forty odd days in heavy weather. Straight- 'way the newspapers state, on the authority of a corres- 'pondent who "rowed round the ship" (I leave you to 'fancy her condition), that America need fear no superiority 'from England, in respect of her wooden walls. The 'same correspondent is "quite pleased" with the frank 'manner of the English officers; and patronizes them as 'being, for John Bulls, quite refined. My face, like Haji 'Baba's, turns upside down, and my liver is changed to 'water, when I come upon such things, and think who 'writes and who read them. . . .

Lord Ashburton's arrival.

'They won't let me alone about slavery. A certain 'Judge in St. Louis went so far yesterday, that I fell upon 'him (to the indescribable horror of the man who brought 'him) and told him a piece of my mind. I said that I 'was very averse to speaking on the subject here, and 'always forbore, if possible: but when he pitied our 'national ignorance of the truths of slavery, I must remind 'him that we went upon indisputable records, obtained 'after many years of careful investigation, and at all sorts 'of self-sacrifice; and that I believed we were much more 'competent to judge of its atrocity and horror, than he 'who had been brought up in the midst of it. I told him 'that I could sympathise with men who admitted it to 'be a dreadful evil, but frankly confessed their inability

Talk with a judge on slavery.

'to devise a means of getting rid of it: but that men who 'spoke of it as a blessing, as a matter of course, as a 'state of things to be desired, were out of the pale of 'reason; and that for them to speak of ignorance or pre-'judice was an absurdity too ridiculous to be combated. . .

ST. LOUIS: 1842. C. D. to J. F.

'It is not six years ago, since a slave in this very same 'St. Louis, being arrested (I forget for what), and knowing 'he had no chance of a fair trial, be his offence what it 'might, drew his bowie knife and ripped the constable 'across the body. A scuffle ensuing, the desperate negro 'stabbed two others with the same weapon. The mob 'who gathered round (among whom were men of mark, 'wealth, and influence in the place) overpowered him by 'numbers; carried him away to a piece of open ground 'beyond the city; *and burned him alive.* This, I say, 'was done within six years in broad day; in a city with 'its courts, lawyers, tipstaffs, judges, jails, and hangman; 'and not a hair on the head of one of those men has 'been hurt to this day. And it is, believe me, it is the 'miserable, wretched independence in small things; the 'paltry republicanism which recoils from honest service to 'an honest man, but does not shrink from every trick, 'artifice, and knavery in business; that makes these 'slaves necessary, and will render them so, until the in-'dignation of other countries sets them free.

A negro burnt alive.

'They say the slaves are fond of their masters. Look 'at this pretty vignette* (part of the stock-in-trade of a

Feeling of slaves themselves.

* 'RUNAWAY NEGRO IN JAIL' was the heading of the advertisement enclosed, which had a woodcut of master and slave in its corner, and announced that Wilford Garner, sheriff and jailer of Chicot County, Arkansas, requested owner to come and prove property—or——

ST. LOUIS: 1842. C. D. to J. F.

'newspaper), and judge how you would feel, when men, 'looking in your face; told you such tales with the news- 'paper lying on the table. In all the slave districts, 'advertisements for runaways are as much matters of 'course as the announcement of the play for the evening 'with us. The poor creatures themselves fairly worship 'English people: they would do anything for them. They 'are perfectly acquainted with all that takes place in 'reference to emancipation; and *of course* their attach- 'ment to us grows out of their deep devotion to their 'owners. I cut this illustration out of a newspaper which 'had a leader in reference to *the abominable and hellish* '*doctrine of Abolition—repugnant alike to every law* '*of God and Nature.* "I know something" said a Dr. 'Bartlett (a very accomplished man), late a fellow-pas- 'senger of ours: "I know something of their fondness for '"their masters. I live in Kentucky; and I can assert '"upon my honour, that, in my neighbourhood, it is as '"common for a runaway slave, retaken, to draw his bowie '"knife and rip his owner's bowels open, as it is for you '"to see a drunken fight in London."

Dr. Bartlett.

'SAME BOAT, *Saturday, Sixteenth April*, 1842.

Pretty little scene.

'Let me tell you, my dear Forster, before I forget it, a 'pretty little scene we had on board the boat between 'Louisville and St. Louis, as we were going to the latter 'place. It is not much to tell, but it was very pleasant 'and interesting to witness.'

What follows has been printed in the *Notes*, and ought not, by the rule I have laid down, to be given here. But,

beautiful as the printed description is, it has not profited by the alteration of some touches and the omission of others in the first fresh version of it, which, for that reason, I here preserve—one of the most charming soul-felt pictures of character and emotion that ever warmed the heart in fact or fiction. It was, I think, Jeffrey's favorite passage in all the writings of Dickens: and certainly, if anyone would learn the secret of their popularity, it is to be read in the observation and description of this little incident. ST. LOUIS: 1842.

A little mother:

'There was a little woman on board, with a little baby; 'and both little woman and little child were cheerful, 'good-looking, bright-eyed, and fair to see. The little 'woman had been passing a long time with a sick mother 'in New York, and had left her home in St. Louis in that 'condition in which ladies who truly love their lords desire 'to be. The baby had been born in her mother's house, 'and she had not seen her husband (to whom she was now 'returning) for twelve months: having left him a month 'or two after their marriage. Well, to be sure, there never 'was a little woman so full of hope, and tenderness, and 'love, and anxiety, as this little woman was: and there she 'was, all the livelong day, wondering whether "he" would 'be at the wharf; and whether "he" had got her letter; 'and whether, if she sent the baby on shore by somebody 'else, "*he*" *would know it, meeting it in the street:* which, 'seeing that he had never set eyes upon it in his life, was 'not very likely in the abstract, but was probable enough 'to the young mother. She was such an artless little 'creature; and was in such a sunny, beaming, hopeful

returning to her husband.

St. Louis: 1842.

C. D. to J. F.

'state; and let out all this matter, clinging close about 'her heart, so freely; that all the other lady passengers 'entered into the spirit of it as much as she: and the 'captain (who heard all about it from his wife) was won-'drous sly, I promise you: enquiring, every time we met 'at table, whether she expected anybody to meet her at

The ladies and the captain.

'St. Louis, and supposing she wouldn't want to go ashore 'the night we reached it, and cutting many other dry 'jokes which convulsed all his hearers, but especially the 'ladies. There was one little, weazen, dried-apple old 'woman among them, who took occasion to doubt the 'constancy of husbands under such circumstances of 'bereavement; and there was another lady (with a lap 'dog), old enough to moralize on the lightness of human 'affections, and yet not so old that she could help nursing 'the baby now and then, or laughing with the rest when

The little mother and her baby.

'the little woman called it by its father's name, and asked 'it all manner of fantastic questions concerning him, in 'the joy of her heart. It was something of a blow to the 'little woman, that when we were within twenty miles of 'our destination, it became clearly necessary to put the 'baby to bed; but she got over that with the same good 'humour, tied a little handkerchief over her little head, 'and came out into the gallery with the rest. Then, such 'an oracle as she became in reference to the localities! 'and such facetiousness as was displayed by the married 'ladies! and such sympathy as was shown by the single 'ones! and such peals of laughter as the little woman

St. Louis in sight.

'herself (who would just as soon have cried) greeted every 'jest with! At last, there were the lights of St. Louis—

'and here was the wharf—and those were the steps—and 'the little woman, covering her face with her hands, and 'laughing, or seeming to laugh, more than ever, ran into 'her own cabin, and shut herself up tight. I have no 'doubt, that, in the charming inconsistency of such excite- 'ment, she stopped her ears lest she should hear "him" 'asking for her; but I didn't see her do it. Then a great 'crowd of people rushed on board, though the boat was 'not yet made fast, and was staggering about among the 'other boats to find a landing-place; and everybody looked 'for the husband, and nobody saw him; when all of a 'sudden, right in the midst of them—God knows how she 'ever got there—there was the little woman hugging with 'both arms round the neck of a fine, good-looking, sturdy 'fellow! And in a moment afterwards, there she was again, 'dragging him through the small door of her small cabin, 'to look at the baby as he lay asleep!—What a good thing 'it is to know that so many of us would have been quite 'downhearted and sorry if that husband had failed to 'come.'

St. Louis: 1842.

C. D. to J. F.

The meeting.

He then resumes: but in what follows nothing is repeated that will be found in his printed description of the jaunt to the looking-glass prairie.

'But about the Prairie—it is not, I must confess, so 'good in its way as this; but I'll tell you all about that 'too, and leave you to judge for yourself. Tuesday the '12th was the day fixed; and we were to start at five in 'the morning—sharp. I turned out at four; shaved and 'dressed; got some bread and milk; and throwing up the 'window, looked down into the street. Deuce a coach

Trip to a prairie.

ST. LOUIS: 1842.
C. D. to J. F.

'was there, nor did anybody seem to be stirring in the 'house. I waited until half-past five; but no preparations 'being visible even then, I left Mr. Q to look out, and lay 'down upon the bed again. There I slept until nearly 'seven, when I was called. . . . Exclusive of Mr. Q and 'myself, there were twelve of my committee in the party: 'all lawyers except one. He was an intelligent, mild, 'well-informed gentleman of my own age—the unitarian 'minister of the place. With him, and two other com- 'panions, I got into the first coach. . . .

A good inn.

'We halted at so good an inn at Lebanon that we 'resolved to return there at night, if possible. One would 'scarcely find a better village alehouse of a homely kind 'in England. During our halt I walked into the village, 'and met a *dwelling-house* coming down-hill at a good 'round trot, drawn by some twenty oxen! We resumed 'our journey as soon as possible, and got upon the

On the prairie at sunset.

'looking-glass prairie at sunset. We halted near a soli- 'tary log-house for the sake of its water; unpacked the 'baskets; formed an encampment with the carriages; and 'dined.

'Now, a prairie is undoubtedly worth seeing—but 'more, that one may say one has seen it, than for any 'sublimity it possesses in itself. Like most things, great 'or small, in this country, you hear of it with considerable 'exaggerations. Basil Hall was really quite right in

General character of scenery.

'depreciating the general character of the scenery. The 'widely-famed Far West is not to be compared with even 'the tamest portions of Scotland or Wales. You stand 'upon the prairie, and see the unbroken horizon all round

'you. You are on a great plain, which is like a sea 'without water. I am exceedingly fond of wild and 'lonely scenery, and believe that I have the faculty of 'being as much impressed by it as any man living. But 'the prairie fell, by far, short of my preconceived idea. I 'felt no such emotions as I do in crossing Salisbury plain. 'The excessive flatness of the scene makes it dreary, but 'tame. Grandeur is certainly not its characteristic. I 'retired from the rest of the party, to understand my 'own feelings the better; and looked all round, again and 'again. It was fine. It was worth the ride. The sun 'was going down, very red and bright; and the prospect 'looked like that ruddy sketch of Catlin's, which attracted 'our attention (you remember?); except that there was 'not so much ground as he represents, between the 'spectator and the horizon. But to say (as the fashion is, 'here) that the sight is a landmark in one's existence, and 'awakens a new set of sensations, is sheer gammon. I 'would say to every man who can't see a prairie—go to 'Salisbury plain, Marlborough downs, or any of the broad, 'high, open lands near the sea. Many of them are fully 'as impressive; and Salisbury plain is *decidedly* more so.

ST. LOUIS: 1842. C. D. to J. F.

The prairie described.

Disappointment.

'We had brought roast fowls, buffalo's tongue, ham, 'bread, cheese, butter, biscuits, sherry, champagne, lemons 'and sugar for punch, and abundance of ice. It was a 'delicious meal: and as they were most anxious that I 'should be pleased, I warmed myself into a state of sur- 'passing jollity; proposed toasts from the coach-box (which 'was the chair); ate and drank with the best; and made, 'I believe, an excellent companion to a very friendly

Enjoyment.

ST. LOUIS: 1842.

C. D. to J. F.

'companionable party. In an hour or so, we packed up, 'and drove back to the inn at Lebanon. While supper 'was preparing, I took a pleasant walk with my unitarian 'friend; and when it was over (we drank nothing with it 'but tea and coffee) we went to bed. The clergyman and I 'had an exquisitely clean little chamber of our own: and 'the rest of the party were quartered overhead. . . . .

Soirée at the Planter's-house.

'We got back to St. Louis soon after twelve at noon; 'and I rested during the remainder of the day. The soirée 'came off at night, in a very good ball-room at our inn— 'the Planter's-house. The whole of the guests were intro- 'duced to us, singly. We were glad enough, you may 'believe, to come away at midnight; and were very tired. 'Yesterday, I wore a blouse. To-day, a fur-coat. Trying 'changes!

'IN THE SAME BOAT.
'*Sunday, Sixteenth April*, 1842.

Planters' inns.

'The inns in these outlandish corners of the world, 'would astonish you by their goodness. The Planter's- 'house is as large as the Middlesex-hospital and built 'very much on our hospital plan, with long wards abun- 'dantly ventilated, and plain whitewashed walls. They

Good fare.

'had a famous notion of sending up at breakfast-time 'large glasses of new milk with blocks of ice in them as 'clear as crystal. Our table was abundantly supplied 'indeed at every meal. One day when Kate and I were 'dining alone together, in our own room, we counted 'sixteen dishes on the table at the same time.

No grey heads in St. Louis.

'The society is pretty rough, and intolerably conceited. 'All the inhabitants are young. *I didn't see one grey*

'*head in St. Louis.* There is an island close by, called 'bloody island. It is the duelling ground of St. Louis; 'and is so called from the last fatal duel which was fought 'there. It was a pistol duel, breast to breast, and both 'parties fell dead at the same time. One of our prairie 'party (a young man) had acted as second there, in several 'encounters. The last occasion was a duel with rifles, at 'forty paces; and coming home he told us how he had 'bought his man a coat of green linen to fight in, woollen 'being usually fatal to rifle wounds. Prairie is variously 'called (on the refinement principle I suppose) Para*a*rer; 'pare*a*rer; and paro*a*rer. I am afraid, my dear fellow, 'you will have had great difficulty in reading all the 'foregoing text. I have written it, very laboriously, on 'my knee; and the engine throbs and starts as if the boat 'were possessed with a devil.

SANDUSKY: 1842.

C. D. to J. F.

Duelling.

'SANDUSKY.

'*Sunday, Twenty-fourth April*, 1842.

'We went ashore at Louisville this night week, where 'I left off, two lines above; and slept at the hotel, in 'which we had put up before. The Messenger being 'abominably slow, we got our luggage out next morning, 'and started on again at eleven o'clock in the Benjamin 'Franklin mail boat: a splendid vessel with a cabin 'more than two hundred feet long, and little state-rooms 'affording proportionate conveniences. She got in at 'Cincinnati by one o'clock next morning, when we landed 'in the dark and went back to our old hotel. As we 'made our way on foot over the broken pavement, Anne 'measured her length upon the ground, but didn't hurt

From Louisville to Cincinnati.

SANDUSKY: 1842. C. D. to J. F.

'herself. I say nothing of Kate's troubles—but you recol-
'lect her propensity? She falls into, or out of, every
'coach or boat we enter; scrapes the skin off her legs;
'brings great sores and swellings on her feet; chips large
'fragments out of her ankle-bones; and makes herself
'blue with bruises. She really has, however, since we
'got over the first trial of being among circumstances so
'new and so fatiguing, made a *most admirable* traveller
'in every respect. She has never screamed or expressed
'alarm under circumstances that would have fully justified
'her in doing so, even in my eyes; has never given way
'to despondency or fatigue, though we have now been
'travelling incessantly, through a very rough country, for
'more than a month, and have been at times, as you may
'readily suppose, most thoroughly tired; has always
'accommodated herself, well and cheerfully, to everything;
'and has pleased me very much, and proved herself per-
'fectly game.

Mrs. Dickens as a traveller.

From Cincinnati to Columbus.

'We remained at Cincinnati, all Tuesday the nineteenth,
'and all that night. At eight o'clock on Wednesday morn-
'ing the twentieth, we left in the mail stage for Columbus:
'Anne, Kate, and Mr. Q inside; I on the box. The dis-
'tance is a hundred and twenty miles; the road macadam-
'ized; and for an American road, very good. We were
'three and twenty hours performing the journey. We
'travelled all night; reached Columbus at seven in the
'morning; breakfasted; and went to bed until dinner time.

A levee at Columbus.

'At night we held a levee for half an hour, and the people
'poured in as they always do: each gentleman with a lady
'on each arm, exactly like the Chorus to God Save the

'Queen. I wish you could see them, that you might 'know what a splendid comparison this is. They wear 'their clothes, precisely as the chorus people do; and 'stand—supposing Kate and me to be in the centre of the 'stage, with our backs to the footlights—just as the com- 'pany would, on the first night of the season. They shake 'hands exactly after the manner of the guests at a ball at 'the Adelphi or the Haymarket; receive any facetious- 'ness on my part, as if there were a stage direction "all '"laugh;" and have rather more difficulty in "getting off" 'than the last gentlemen, in white pantaloons, polished 'boots, and berlins, usually display, under the most trying 'circumstances.

SANDUSKY: 1842.

C. D. to J. F.

What a levee is like.

'Next morning, that is to say on Friday the 22nd at 'seven o'clock exactly, we resumed our journey. The stage 'from Columbus to this place only running thrice a week, 'and not on that day, I bargained for an "exclusive extra" 'with four horses, for which I paid forty dollars, or eight 'pounds English: the horses changing, as they would if it 'were the regular stage. To ensure our getting on properly, 'the proprietors sent an agent on the box; and, with no 'other company but him and a hamper full of eatables 'and drinkables, we went upon our way. It is impossible 'to convey an adequate idea to you of the kind of road 'over which we travelled. I can only say that it was, at 'the best, but a track through the wild forest, and among 'the swamps, bogs, and morasses of the withered bush. 'A great portion of it was what is called a "corduroy '"road:" which is made by throwing round logs or whole 'trees into a swamp, and leaving them to settle there.

From Columbus to Sandusky.

A corduroy road.

SANDUSKY: 1842.

C. D. to J. F.

'Good Heaven! if you only felt one of the least of the 'jolts with which the coach falls from log to log! It is 'like nothing but going up a steep flight of stairs in an 'omnibus. Now the coach flung us in a heap on its floor, 'and now crushed our heads against its roof. Now one 'side of it was deep in the mire, and we were holding 'on to the other. Now it was lying on the horses' tails, 'and now again upon its back. But it never, never, was 'in any position, attitude, or kind of motion, to which we 'are accustomed in coaches; or made the smallest approach 'to our experience of the proceedings of any sort of vehicle 'that goes on wheels. Still, the day was beautiful, the

The travellers alone.

'air delicious, and we were *alone:* with no tobacco spittle, 'or eternal prosy conversation about dollars and politics '(the only two subjects they ever converse about, or can 'converse upon) to bore us. We really enjoyed it; made 'a joke of the being knocked about; and were quite 'merry. At two o'clock we stopped in the wood to open 'our hamper and dine; and we drank to our darlings and 'all friends at home. Then we started again and went on 'until ten o'clock at night: when we reached a place 'called Lower Sandusky, sixty-two miles from our starting 'point. The last three hours of the journey were not

A thunder storm.

'very pleasant, for it lightened—awfully: every flash very 'vivid, very blue, and very long: and, the wood being so 'dense that the branches on *either* side of the track 'rattled and broke *against* the coach, it was rather a 'dangerous neighbourhood for a thunder storm.

A log-house inn.

'The inn at which we halted was a rough log-house. 'The people were all abed, and we had to knock them up.

'We had the queerest sleeping room, with two doors, one 'opposite the other; both opening directly on the wild 'black country, and neither having any lock or bolt. The 'effect of these opposite doors was, that one was always 'blowing the other open: an ingenuity in the art of 'building, which I don't remember to have met with 'before. You should have seen me, in my shirt, blockad- 'ing them with portmanteaus, and desperately endeavour- 'ing to make the room tidy! But the blockading was 'really needful, for in my dressing case I have about '250*l.* in gold; and for the amount of the middle figure 'in that scarce metal, there are not a few men in the 'West who would murder their fathers. Apropos of this 'golden store, consider at your leisure the strange state of 'things in this country. It has no money; really *no* '*money*. The bank paper won't pass; the newspapers 'are full of advertisements from tradesmen who sell by 'barter; and American gold is not to be had, or pur- 'chased. I bought sovereigns, English sovereigns, at first: 'but as I could get none of them at Cincinnati, so this 'day, I have had to purchase French gold; 20-franc pieces; 'with which I am travelling as if I were in Paris!

SANDUSKY: 1842.

C. D. to J. F.

Making tidy.

A monetary crisis.

'But let's go back to Lower Sandusky. Mr. Q went to 'bed up in the roof of the log-house somewhere, but was 'so beset by bugs that he got up after an hour and *lay* '*in the coach* ..... where he was obliged to wait till 'breakfast time. We breakfasted, driver and all, in the 'one common room. It was papered with newspapers, 'and was as rough a place as need be. At half past seven 'we started again, and we reached Sandusky at six o'clock

Breakfast at the inn.

SANDUSKY: 1842.

C. D. to J. F.

'yesterday afternoon. It is on Lake Erie, twenty-four 'hours' journey by steam boat from Buffalo. We found 'no boat here, nor has there been one,' since. We are 'waiting, with every thing packed up, ready to start on 'the shortest notice; and are anxiously looking out for 'smoke in the distance.

'There was an old gentleman in the Log inn at Lower 'Sandusky who treats with the Indians on the part of 'the American government, and has just concluded a 'treaty with the Wyandot Indians at that place to remove 'next year to some land provided for them west of the 'Mississippi: a little way beyond St. Louis. He de- 'scribed his negotiation to me, and their reluctance to 'go, exceedingly well. They are a fine people, but 'degraded and broken down. If you could see any of 'their men and women on a race-course in England, you 'would not know them from gipsies.

Indians.

'We are in a small house here, but a very comfortable one, and the people are exceedingly obliging. Their demeanour in these country parts is invariably morose, sullen, clownish, and repulsive. I should think there is not, on the face of the earth, a people so entirely 'destitute of humour, vivacity, or the capacity of enjoy- 'ment. It is most remarkable. I am quite serious when 'I say that I have not heard a hearty laugh these six 'weeks, except my own; nor have I seen a merry face 'on any shoulders but a black man's. Lounging listlessly 'about; idling in bar-rooms; smoking; spitting; and 'lolling on the pavement in rocking-chairs, outside the 'shop doors; are the only recreations. I don't think the

American people not given to humour.

The only recreations.

'national shrewdness extends beyond the Yankees; that 'is, the Eastern men. The rest are heavy, dull, and 'ignorant. Our landlord here is from the East. He is 'a handsome, obliging, civil fellow. He comes into the 'room with his hat on; spits in the fire place as he talks; 'sits down on the sofa with his hat on; pulls out his 'newspaper, and reads; but to all this I am accustomed. 'He is anxious to please—and that is enough.

NIAGARA FALLS: 1842.

C. D. to J. F.

A landlord.

'We are wishing very much for a boat; for we hope to 'find our letters at Buffalo. It is half past one; and as 'there is no boat in sight, we are fain (sorely against 'our wills) to order an early dinner.

'*Tuesday, April Twenty-sixth*, 1842.

'NIAGARA FALLS!!! (UPON THE ENGLISH* SIDE).

'I don't know at what length I might have written 'you from Sandusky, my beloved friend, if a steamer 'had not come in sight just as I finished the last unintel- 'ligible sheet (oh! the ink in these parts!): whereupon I 'was obliged to pack up bag and baggage, to swallow a 'hasty apology for a dinner, and to hurry my train on 'board with all the speed I might: She was a fine steam- 'ship, four hundred tons burden, name the Constitution, 'had very few passengers on board, and had bountiful and 'handsome accommodation. It's all very fine talking 'about Lake Erie, but it won't do for persons who are 'liable to sea-sickness. We were all sick. It's almost 'as bad in that respect as the Atlantic. The waves are 'very short, and horribly constant. We reached Buffalo

From Sandusky to Buffalo.

On Lake Erie.

* Ten dashes underneath the word.

NIAGARA FALLS: 1842.

C. D. to J. F.

'at six this morning; went ashore to breakfast; sent to 'the post-office forthwith; and received—oh! who or what 'can say with how much pleasure and what unspeakable 'delight!—our English letters!

'We lay all Sunday night, at a town (and a beautiful 'town too) called Cleveland; on Lake Erie. The people 'poured on board, in crowds, by six on Monday morning, to 'see me; and a party of "gentlemen" actually planted 'themselves before our little cabin, and stared in at the

Gazed at.

'door and windows *while I was washing, and Kate lay 'in bed.* I was so incensed at this, and at a certain news- 'paper published in that town which I had accidentally 'seen in Sandusky (advocating war with England to the 'death, saying that Britain must be "whipped again," and 'promising all true Americans that within two years they 'should sing Yankee-doodle in Hyde-park and Hail 'Columbia in the courts of Westminster), that when the 'mayor came on board to present himself to me, according

Rude reception of a mayor:

'to custom, I refused to see him, and bade Mr. Q tell him 'why and wherefore. His honor took it very coolly, and 'retired to the top of the wharf, with a big stick and a

his consolation.

'whittling knife, with which he worked so lustily (staring 'at the closed door of our cabin all the time) that long 'before the boat left, the big stick was no bigger than a 'cribbage peg!

From Buffalo to Niagara.

'I never in my life was in such a state of excitement 'as coming from Buffalo here, this morning. You come 'by railroad; and are nigh two hours upon the way. I 'looked out for the spray, and listened for the roar, as far 'beyond the bounds of possibility, as though, landing in

'Liverpool, I were to listen for the music of your pleasant 'voice in Lincoln's-inn-fields. At last, when the train 'stopped, I saw two great white clouds rising up from 'the depths of the earth—nothing more. They rose up 'slowly, gently, majestically, into the air. I dragged Kate 'down a deep and slippery path leading to the ferry boat; 'bullied Anne for not coming fast enough; perspired at 'every pore; and felt, it is impossible to say how, as the 'sound grew louder and louder in my ears, and yet nothing 'could be seen for the mist.

NIAGARA FALLS: 1842.

C. D. to J. F.

Nearing the Falls.

'There were two English officers with us (ah! what 'gentlemen, what noblemen of nature they seemed), and 'they hurried off with me; leaving Kate and Anne on 'a crag of ice; and clambered after me over the rocks 'at the foot of the small Fall, while the ferryman was 'getting the boat ready. I was not disappointed—but 'I could make out nothing. In an instant, I was blinded 'by the spray, and wet to the skin. I saw the water 'tearing madly down from some immense height, but 'could get no idea of shape, or situation, or anything 'but vague immensity. But when we were seated in the 'boat, and crossing at the very foot of the cataract—then 'I began to feel what it was. Directly I had changed my 'clothes at the inn I went out again, taking Kate with 'me; and hurried to the Horse-shoe-fall. I went down 'alone, into the very basin. It would be hard for a man 'to stand nearer God than he does there. There was a 'bright rainbow at my feet; and from that I looked 'up to—great Heaven! to *what* a fall of bright green 'water! The broad, deep, mighty stream seems to die

Nearer still.

Horse-shoe-fall.

NIAGARA FALLS: 1842.

C. D. to J. F.

A fancy.

'in the act of falling; and, from its unfathomable grave 'arises that tremendous ghost of spray and mist which 'is never laid, and has been haunting this place with 'the same dread solemnity—perhaps from the creation 'of the world.

'We purpose remaining here a week. In my next, I 'will try to give you some idea of my impressions, and to 'tell you how they change with every day. At present it

Effect upon him of Niagara.

'is impossible. I can only say that the first effect of this 'tremendous spectacle on me, was peace of mind—tran- 'quillity—great thoughts of eternal rest and happiness '—nothing of terror. I can shudder at the recollection 'of Glencoe (dear friend, with Heaven's leave we must 'see Glencoe together), but whenever I think of Niagara, 'I shall think of its beauty.

'If you could hear the roar that is in my ears as I write 'this. Both Falls are under our windows. From our 'sitting-room and bed-room we look down straight upon 'them. There is not a soul in the house but ourselves. 'What would I give if you and Mac were here, to share

The old recollection.

'the sensations of this time! I was going to add, what 'would I give if the dear girl whose ashes lie in Kensal- 'green, had lived to come so far along with us—but she 'has been here many times, I doubt not, since her sweet 'face faded from my earthly sight.

'One word on the precious letters before I close. You 'are right, my dear fellow, about the papers; and you are 'right (I grieve to say) about the people. *Am I right?* 'quoth the conjuror. *Yes!* from gallery, pit, and boxes.

'I *did* let out those things, at first, against my will, but 'when I come to tell you all—well; only wait—only wait '—till the end of July. I say no more.

NIAGARA FALLS: 1842.

C. D. to J. F.

'I do perceive a perplexingly divided and subdivided 'duty, in the matter of the book of travels. Oh! the sub 'limated essence of comicality that I *could* distil, from the 'materials I have! . . . You are a part, and an essential 'part, of our home, dear friend, and I exhaust my imagi- 'nation in picturing the circumstances under which I shall 'surprise you by walking into 58, Lincoln's-inn fields. We 'are truly grateful to God for the health and happiness 'of our inexpressibly dear children and all our friends. 'But one letter more—only one. . . . I don't seem to 'have been half affectionate enough, but there *are* thoughts, 'you know, that lie too deep for words.'

Looking forward.

CHAPTER XXIV.

NIAGARA AND MONTREAL.

1842.

NIAGARA FALLS: 1842.

MY friend was better than his word, and two more letters reached me before his return. The opening of the first was written from Niagara on the third, and its close from Montreal on the twelfth, of May; from which latter city also, on the 26th of that month, the last of all was written.

Last two letters.

Much of the first of these letters had reference to the international copyright agitation, and gave strong expression to the indignation awakened in him (nor less in some of the best men of America) by the adoption, at a public meeting in Boston itself, of a memorial against any change of the law, in the course of which it was stated, that, if English authors were invested with any control over the republication of their own books, it would be no longer possible for American editors to alter and adapt them to the American taste. This deliberate declaration however, unsparing as Dickens's anger at it was, in effect vanquished him. He saw the hopelessness of pursuing further any present effort to bring about the change desired; and he took the determination, not only to drop any allusion to

Dickens vanquished.

it in his proposed book, but to try what effect might be produced, when he should again be in England, by a league of English authors to suspend further intercourse with American publishers while the law should remain as it is. On his return he made accordingly a public appeal to this effect, stating his own intention for the future to forego all profit derivable from the authorized transmission of early proofs across the Atlantic; but his hopes in this particular also were doomed to disappointment. I now leave the subject, quoting only from his present letter the general remarks with which it is dismissed by himself.

NIAGARA FALLS: 1842.

'NIAGARA FALLS.
'*Tuesday, Third May*, 1842.

C. D. to J. F.

'I'll tell you what the two obstacles to the passing of an 'international copyright law with England, are: firstly, 'the national love of "doing" a man in any bargain or 'matter of business'; secondly, the national vanity. Both 'these characteristics prevail to an extent which no 'stranger can possibly estimate.

Two obstacles to international copyright.

'With regard to the first, I seriously believe that it is 'an essential part of the pleasure derived from the 'perusal of a popular English book, that the author 'gets nothing for it. It is so dar-nation 'cute—so 'knowing in Jonathan to get his reading on those 'terms. He has the Englishman so regularly on the 'hip that his eye twinkles with slyness, cunning, and 'delight; and he chuckles over the humour of the page 'with an appreciation of it, quite inconsistent with, 'and apart from, its honest purchase. The raven hasn't

The first.

NIAGARA FALLS: 1842.

C. D. to J. F.

'more joy in eating a stolen piece of meat, than the 'American has in reading the English book which he 'gets for nothing.

'With regard to the second, it reconciles that better 'and more elevated class who are above this sort of 'satisfaction, with surprising ease. The man's read in 'America! The Americans like him! They are glad 'to see him when he comes here! They flock about 'him, and tell him that they are grateful to him for

The second.

'spirits in sickness; for many hours of delight in health; 'for a hundred fanciful associations which are constantly 'interchanged between themselves, and their wives and 'children at home! It is nothing that all this takes 'place in countries where he is *paid:* it is nothing that 'he has won fame for himself elsewhere, and profit too. 'The Americans read him; the free, enlightened, inde- 'pendent Americans; and what more *would* he have? 'Here's reward enough for any man. The national 'vanity swallows up all other countries on the face of 'the earth, and leaves but this above the ocean. Now, 'mark what the real value of this American reading is. 'Find me in the whole range of literature one single

Value of literary popularity in America.

'solitary English book which becomes popular with them, 'before, by going through the ordeal at home and 'becoming popular there, it has forced itself on their 'attention—and I am content that the law should 'remain as it is, for ever and a day. I must make one 'exception. There *are* some mawkish tales of fashion- 'able life before which crowds fall down as they were 'gilded calves, which have been snugly enshrined in cir-

'culating libraries at home, from the date of their publica- NIAGARA FALLS: 1842.
'tion.

'As to telling them, they will have no literature of their C. D. to J. F.
'own, the universal answer (out of Boston) is, "We don't
'"want one. Why should we pay for one when we can
'"get it for nothing? Our people don't think of poetry,
'"sir. Dollars, banks, and cotton are *our* books, sir." A substitute for literature.
'And they certainly are in one sense; for a lower average
'of general information than exists in this country on all
'other topics, it would be very hard to find. So much, at
'present, for international copyright.'

The same letter kept the promise made in its predecessor that one or two more sketches of character should be sent. 'One of the most amusing phrases in use all through 'the country, for its constant repetition, and adaptation to 'every emergency, is "Yes, Sir." Let me give you a 'Yes, sir.'
'specimen.' (The specimen was the dialogue, in the *Notes*, of straw-hat and brown-hat, during the stage-coach ride to Sandusky.) 'I am not joking, upon my word. This is 'exactly the dialogue. Nothing else occurring to me at 'this moment, let me give you the secretary's portrait. 'Shall I?

'He is of a sentimental turn—strongly sentimental; The secretary.
'and tells Anne as June approaches that he hopes "we
'"shall sometimes think of him" in our own country. He
'wears a cloak, like Hamlet; and a very tall, big, limp,
'dusty black hat, which he exchanges on long journeys
'for a cap like Harlequin's. . . . He sings; and in some of
'our quarters, when his bedroom has been near ours, we
'have heard him grunting bass notes through the keyhole

NIAGARA FALLS: 1842.

C. D. to J. F.

'of his door, to attract our attention. His desire that I 'should formally ask him to sing, and his devices to make 'me do so, are irresistibly absurd. There was a piano in 'our room at Hartford (you recollect our being there, early 'in February?)—and he asked me one night, when we 'were alone, if "Mrs. D" played. "Yes, Mr. Q." Oh '"indeed Sir! *I* sing: so whenever you want *a little* '"*soothing*—" You may imagine how hastily I left the 'room, on some false pretence, without hearing more.

Frightful suggestion.

'He paints. . . An enormous box of oil colours is the 'main part of his luggage: and with these he blazes away, 'in his own room, for hours together. Anne got hold of some 'big-headed, pot-bellied sketches he made of the passengers 'on board the canal-boat (including me in my fur-coat), the 'recollection of which brings the tears into my eyes at this 'minute. He painted the Falls, at Niagara, superbly; and 'is supposed now to be engaged on a full-length represen-'tation of me: waiters having reported that chamber-'maids have said that there is a picture in his room which 'has a great deal of hair. One girl opined that it was '"the beginning of the King's-arms"; but I am pretty 'sure that the Lion is myself. . . . .

Mr. Q's paintings.

The lion and ——.

'Sometimes, but not often, he commences a conversa-'tion. That usually occurs when we are walking the 'deck after dark; or when we are alone together in a 'coach. It is his practice at such times to relate the 'most notorious and patriarchial Joe Miller, as something 'that occurred in his own family. When travelling by 'coach, he is particularly fond of imitating cows and pigs; 'and nearly challenged a fellow passenger the other day,

'who had been moved by the display of this accomplish- 'ment into telling him that he was "a Perfect Calf." He 'thinks it an indispensable act of politeness and attention 'to enquire constantly whether we're not sleepy, or, to use 'his own words, whether we don't "suffer for sleep." If 'we have taken a long nap of fourteen hours or so, after 'a long journey, he is sure to meet me at the bedroom 'door when I turn out in the morning, with this enquiry. 'But apart from the amusement he gives us, I could not 'by possibility have lighted on any one who would have 'suited my purpose so well. I have raised his ten dollars 'per month to twenty; and mean to make it up for six 'months.'

NIAGARA FALLS: 1842.

C. D. to J. F.

Suffering for sleep.

The conclusion of this letter was dated from 'Montreal, 'Thursday, twelfth May;' and was little more than an eager yearning for home. 'This will be a very short and 'stupid letter, my dear friend; for the post leaves here 'much earlier than I expected, and all my grand designs 'for being unusually brilliant fall to the ground. I will 'write you *one line* by the next Cunard boat—reserving 'all else until our happy and long long looked-for 'meeting.

'We have been to Toronto, and Kingston; experiencing 'attentions at each which I should have difficulty in de- 'scribing. The wild and rabid toryism of Toronto, is, I speak 'seriously, *appalling*. English kindness is very different 'from American. People send their horses and carriages 'for your use, but they don't exact as payment the right of 'being always under your nose. We had no less than *five* 'carriages at Kingston waiting our pleasure at one time;

Toryism of Toronto.

MONTREAL: 1842. C. D. to J. F.

'not to mention the commodore's barge and crew, and a 'beautiful government steamer. We dined with Sir 'Charles Bagot last Sunday. Lord Mulgrave was to have 'met us yesterday at Lachine; but as he was wind-bound 'in his yacht and couldn't get in, Sir Richard Jackson 'sent his drag four-in-hand, with two other young fellows 'who are also his aides, and in we came in grand style.

Canadian attentions.

'The Theatricals (I think I told you* I had been invited 'to play with the officers of the Coldstream guards here) 'are, *A Roland for an Oliver; Two o'clock in the 'Morning;* and either the *Young Widow,* or *Deaf as a 'Post.* Ladies (unprofessional) are going to play, for the 'first time. I wrote to Mitchell at New York for a wig 'for Mr. Snobbington, which has arrived, and is brilliant.

Proposed private theatricals.

'If they had done *Love, Law and Physick,* as at first pro- 'posed, I was already "up" in Flexible, having played it 'of old, before my authorship days; but if it should be 'Splash in the *Young Widow,* you will have to do me the 'favor to imagine me in a smart livery-coat, shiny black 'hat and cockade, white knee-cords, white top-boots, blue 'stock, small whip, red cheeks and dark eyebrows. Con- 'ceive Topping's state of mind if I bring this dress home 'and put it on unexpectedly! . . . God bless you, dear 'friend. I can say nothing about the seventh, the day on 'which we sail. It is impossible. Words cannot express 'what we feel now that the time is so near. . . . .'

His last letter, dated from 'Peasco's Hotel, Montreal, 'Canada, twenty-sixth of May,' described the private theatricals, and enclosed me a bill of the play.

* See *ante,* p. 278.

'This, like my last, will be a stupid letter, because both 'Kate and I are thrown into such a state of excitement by 'the near approach of the seventh of June, that we can 'do nothing, and think of nothing.

MONTREAL: 1842.

C. D. to J. F.

Last letter.

'The play came off last night. The audience, between 'five and six hundred strong, were invited as to a party; 'a regular table with refreshments being spread in the 'lobby and saloon. We had the band of the twenty-third '(one of the finest in the service) in the orchestra, the 'theatre was lighted with gas, the scenery was excellent, 'and the properties were all brought from private houses. 'Sir Charles Bagot, Sir Richard Jackson, and their 'staffs were present; and as the military portion of the 'audience were all in full uniform, it was really a splendid 'scene.

The private play.

'We "went" also splendidly; though with nothing very 'remarkable in the acting way. We had for Sir Mark 'Chase a genuine odd fish, with plenty of humour; but 'our Tristram Sappy was not up to the marvellous repu- 'tation he has somehow or other acquired here. I am not 'however, let me tell you, placarded as stage-manager 'for nothing. Everybody was told they would have to 'submit to the most iron despotism; and didn't I come 'Macready over them? Oh no. By no means. Certainly 'not. The pains I have taken with them, and the perspi- 'ration I have expended, during the last ten days, exceed 'in amount anything you can imagine. I had regular plots 'of the scenery made out, and lists of the properties 'wanted; and had them nailed up by the prompter's chair. Every letter that was to be delivered, was written; every

Stage manager's report.

MONTREAL: 1842.
C. D. to J. F.

'piece of money that had to be given, provided; and not a 'single thing lost sight of. I prompted, myself, when I 'was not on; when I was, I made the regular prompter 'of the theatre my deputy; and I never saw anything so 'perfectly touch and go, as the first two pieces. The bed-'room scene in the interlude was as well furnished as 'Vestris had it; with a "practicable" fireplace blazing 'away like mad, and everything in a concatenation accord-'ingly. I really do believe that I was very funny: at least 'I know that I laughed heartily at myself, and made the

Mr. Snobbington.

'part a character, such as you and I know very well: a 'mixture of T——, Harley, Yates, Keeley, and Jerry 'Sneak. It went with a roar, all through; and, as I am 'closing this, they have told me I was so well made up 'that Sir Charles Bagot, who sat in the stage box, had 'no idea who played Mr. Snobbington, until the piece was 'over.

The lady performers.

'But only think of Kate playing! and playing devilish 'well, I assure you! All the ladies were capital, and we 'had no wait or hitch for an instant. You may suppose 'this, when I tell you that we began at eight, and had 'the curtain down at eleven. It is their custom here, to 'prevent heartburnings in a very heartburning town, 'whenever they have played in private, to repeat the 'performances in public. So, on Saturday (substituting, 'of course, real actresses for the ladies), we repeat the 'two first pieces to a paying audience, for the manager's 'benefit. . . .

'I send you a bill, to which I have appended a 'key.

Private Theatricals.

COMMITTEE.

Mrs. TORRENS. | Mrs. PERRY.
W. C. ERMATINGER, Esq. | Captain TORRENS.
THE EARL OF MULGRAVE.

STAGE MANAGER—MR. CHARLES DICKENS.

QUEEN'S THEATRE, MONTREAL.

ON WEDNESDAY EVENING, MAY 25TH, 1842,
WILL BE PERFORMED,

A ROLAND FOR AN OLIVER.

MRS. SELBORNE. ——— Mrs Torrens
MARIA DARLINGTON. ——— Miss Griffin
MRS. FIXTURE. ——— Miss Ermatinger.

MR. SELBORNE. ——— Lord Mulgrave.
ALFRED HIGHFLYER. ——— Mr. Charles Dickens
SIR MARK CHASE. ——— Honorable Mr. Methuen
FIXTURE. ——— Captain Willoughby.
GAMEKEEPER. ——— Captain Granville

AFTER WHICH, AN INTERLUDE IN ONE SCENE, (FROM THE FRENCH,) CALLED

Past Two o'Clock in the Morning.

THE STRANGER. ——— Captain Granville
MR. SNOBBINGTON. ——— Mr. Charles Dickens

TO CONCLUDE WITH THE FARCE, IN ONE ACT, ENTITLED

DEAF AS A POST.

MRS. PLUMPLEY. — Mrs Torrens
AMY TEMPLETON. — Mrs Charles Dickens!!!!!!!!
SOPHY WALTON. — Mrs Perry.
SALLY MAGGS. — Miss Griffin

CAPTAIN TEMPLETON. — Captain Torrens
MR. WALTON. — Captain Willoughby.
TRISTRAM SAPPY. — Doctor Griffin
CRUPPER. — Lord Mulgrave
GALLOP. — Mr. Charles Dickens.

MONTREAL, May 24, 1842. GAZETTE OFFICE.

MONTREAL: 1842.

C. D. to J. F.

'I have not told you half enough. But I promise you 'I shall make you shake your sides about this play. 'Wasn't it worthy of Crummles that when Lord Mulgrave 'and I went out to the door to receive the Governor-'general, the regular prompter followed us in agony with 'four tall candlesticks with wax candles in them, and 'besought us with a bleeding heart to carry two apiece, 'in accordance with all the precedents?

A touch of Crummles.

'I have hardly spoken of our letters, which reached us 'yesterday, shortly before the play began. A hundred 'thousand thanks for your delightful mainsail of that 'gallant little packet. I read it again and again; and 'had it all over again at breakfast time this morning. I 'heard also, by the same ship, from Talfourd, Miss Coutts, 'Brougham, Rogers, and others. A delicious letter from 'Mac too, as good as his painting I swear. Give my 'hearty love to him. . . . God bless you, my dear friend. 'As the time draws nearer, we get FEVERED with anxiety 'for home. . . . Kiss our darlings for us. We shall soon 'meet, please God, and be happier and merrier than ever 'we were, in all our lives. . . . Oh home—home—home— 'home—home—home—HOME!!!!!!!!!!!'

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

BRADBURY, EVANS, AND CO., PRINTERS, WHITEFRIARS.

00023146

Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 18 July, 2018